

Josippon

(Translated from Amharic book of so)

With God, who is one in three persons, as our refuge and strength, we begin to write the **History of the Jews**. This book is similar to the book of Joseph son of Koryon and presents the **memorial of the people of Israel**, the **history of their kings**, the **history of their Temple** from its construction, and the **history of the captives** in eight parts.

The author has written, quoting the histories written from time to time until their end. Thanks be to God, and may forgiveness come upon all of us, Amen.

Adam begot Seth. Seth begot Enos. Enos begot Cainan. Cainan begot Mahalalel. Mahalalel begot Jared. Jared begot Enoch. Enoch begot Methuselah. Methuselah begot Lamech. Lamech begot Noah. Noah begot Shem, Japheth, and Ham. Japheth begot Homer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras.

Homer begot Ascanius, Riphath, and Togarmah. Javan begot Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim. These listed above are the children and grandchildren of Japheth. Their places are also remembered. Accordingly, the people of Madai occupied the land called Curaso. The people of Javan, however, are **Ionians**, and their possession is called Macedonia.

The people of Tubal are called Sabani and have occupied the land called Busani. Busani is located near the river called Resa.

The people of Meshech have occupied the tribe called Kusani.

The people of Tiras are those who occupied Rome. They are settled by the river Kober. Shekhsher and Gelsis, being one tribe, are settled in islands found in the sea.

Most of them are called Parsos and have occupied the land called Rayb. The tribes of Sabedenin occupied the area around the river called Sabseb. The people of Vifanu are called Parisusa and have occupied the land called Antefa, which is above the river Ka'uri.

The area around the river Aura is also their possession. The tribes of Togarmah, including the tribes called Gerbar and Nefsiq, as well as Salen, Balgur, Zion, Botkok, Hamberg, Hahrahr, Welmed, Afefir, and Asebuh, have all been collectively called one tribe. All of these occupied the land to the left side.

The names of their places of possession became associated with their names. Among them, some are settled between rivers called Atenalabawor. Napsiq and Lebarger are settled near rivers called Diyoni Hudba and Lebsa. They are also settled in mountains under the name Almelba. The tribes of Semnenwa are settled near the Ambtoleyan river. Even now, they live by rivers called Konna and Baseba.

The tribes of Bersees entered Macedonia, and the land up to the Tarsus river was theirs. But when the children of Ishmael defeated them, they fled from Tarsus.

The people of Kittim settled in the land called Sabaniya, which is above the river called Meneer. This river flows across Rome.

Sadetim and the tribes called Behakhur settled on islands in the ocean. This ocean encompasses the whole land.

The author of the book says: "After the Flood, they gathered from many places and settled in one place, and their language was one. But God scattered them to different lands and divided their languages and their words, and they became different peoples."

The author continues, saying that after God divided the children of Adam, the children of Kittim went to the land of Asbeniya and lived near the river Bekaron. The children of Akemofal, on their

part, went to the land of Bosia. The children of Tubal founded a country and named their country Sabaniya. He said they named it after their own name.

The people of Kittim desired to become in-laws with the children of Tubal, who were their fathers' brethren. They wanted to marry their daughters. However, the children of Tubal became arrogant and did not want their marriage. After a few years, the children of Tubal came to harvest their crops, and their country, Sabaniyanu, became devoid of men. Many gathered from Kittim and went to the land of Sabaniyan, entered the interior, and captured everyone they found, including the maidens. They took them to their homes, which they had built on a high mountain.

When the children of Tubal learned that their daughters had been captured, they went to Kittim to fight them (the people of Kittim), but they could not defeat them. In that same year, they withdrew from them. Again, the children of Tubal rose to fight the children of Kittim. At this time, the children of Kittim lined up the children they had borne from their (Tubal's) daughters and waited. The born children told them, "Know that if you kill the people of Kittim, we, the daughters of your daughters, will kill your daughters.

Therefore, stop looking at the people of Kittim as enemies and have mercy on us."

When the children of Tubal heard this, they stopped the war, withdrew from them, and returned to their country in peace.

Safwa is the son of Eliphaz, the son of Eli, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham. Peace be upon him. This history also mentions the people of Kittim.

The author of the book says: "When Joseph, son of Jacob, came to the place called Sham to bury his father Jacob, the children of Eli found him and fought him. But Joseph defeated them and

captured Safwa, son of Eliphaz, and many of Safwa's followers, taking them captive to Egypt. He handed them over to King Ensas of Aphrakiya. The king of Aphrakiya received Joseph with great joy.

At that time, there was a man named Otsu in the land of Kittim. This man Otsu was highly regarded by the people of Kittim. This man died without having a son. He had only one daughter named Mahiya. Mahiya was extremely beautiful and lovely by nature.

King Ensas of Aphrakiya sent a proposal to marry her. King Noryos of Nineveh, on his part, sent a proposal to marry her himself. The people of Kittim then sent a message to King Borbos (Noryos) of Nineveh, saying, "Before you sought Mahiya for marriage, King Ensas of Aphrakiya already asked for her in marriage. If we refuse him, he will devastate our country, and we cannot resist him, nor can you save us from his attack."

On the other hand, King Borbos (Noryos) of Nineveh sent a message to King Ensas of Aphrakiya, stating that he had asked to marry Otsu's daughter, Mahiya. However, King Borbos (Noryos) of Nineveh quickly went out with his army to fight them. They sent an urgent appeal to King Ensas of Aphrakiya. Ensas also rose to fight Borbos. The two met in the land of Asbaniya. A fierce battle took place between them. The first victory went to King Borbos of Nineveh, who killed many of King Ensas of Aphrakiya's men. In the second battle, the victory again went to King Ensas of Aphrakiya. He killed King Borbos of Nineveh and made his soldiers his slaves. He put Borbos's corpse in an iron coffin. He also had Borbos's brother, Phales, placed in a gold coffin. He buried both of them and built halls over their tombs, visible to travelers. These structures are still found between Albabu and Romiya.

After securing his victory, Ensas married Mahiya, Otsu's daughter. He took her to his country called Kurtagna and brought her into his palace. However, after a short time, she fell seriously ill, and her illness worsened greatly. Ensas ordered the renowned physicians to heal her from her illness and asked them to tell him the cause of her sickness.

They told him, "She has no particular reason to be ill. She became sick only due to a change in wind and drinking unusual water. We heard that when she was in her country, she used to drink water that flowed from a spring."

King Ensas then ordered water to be brought from the spring they mentioned. He measured this water and found it lighter for drinking than the water from his own country. Immediately, he transported this spring water from the land of Kittim to his country Aphrakiya, to his capital city, and his palace. The girl drank from it, and her illness was healed immediately. Her beauty was restored.

This King Ensas of Aphrakiya was a kind and good man to the Israelites. He gave Joseph, son of Jacob, the land called Kittim with its people and its ruler. The land of Kittim is a large and wealthy country. The people of Kittim are strong and powerful warriors. Joseph built a strong palace there and lived in it. Joseph greatly admired King Ensas of Aphrakiya and honored him immensely. He became his son-in-law and ruled the land of Kittim. Joseph lived there for 14 years and died. He was buried in the land of Kittim. The people of Kittim loved him very much. After Joseph died, his son, named Tin, reigned in his place.

Tin, son of Joseph, was a great and powerful king. He was mighty in his wisdom and strong in battle. He built a great city in the land of Kittim. He also built a large and strong house for himself in this

city. He collected much wealth and gold and silver. He also created an abundance of iron and copper. This king was wealthy in everything. He was a man of great understanding and wisdom, strong in battle, and courageous. His fame spread throughout the world.

When he reigned, he wrote a book about how he governed his people and the lands he conquered. He also built a large tower for the idol called Zuhai and was able to build many ships. His ships were used to serve the idol called Zuhai.

This king went to Kurtaga. His intention was to fight Asdawils. Asdawils was the son of King Ensas of Africa. He intended to fight his father because he wanted to marry Asdawils' daughter, Sofonia. This was similar to the war Asdawils' father, Ensas, waged to take Mahiya, Otsu's daughter, who was in Kittim. Sofonia was as beautiful as Mahiya. Sofonia remained superior in beauty until she was seventy years old. Many were so infatuated with her love that they would attach her image to their clothes. This king also had a double name, Binas. This Tinos came with his army and settled in Kurtaga. He waged war and attacked the country. Ensas cut off the water canal he had built out of love for the beautiful Mahiya. He destroyed half of the city.

Asdawils, on his part, came to meet him in battle. A great war took place between them. In the war, Asdawils died. Tinos enslaved Asdawils' soldiers and ruled them. Immediately, he went to the city where Sofonia was and took Sofonia. Sofonia was Asdawils' daughter. This means he killed her father and took her. He also took her to Kittim. Tinos's glory greatly increased. He reigned for forty-five years and then died. After him, Anakiyos reigned for thirty-eight years as king.

After Anakiyos, Selkilos reigned for twenty-nine years. After him, Setinas reigned for fifty years and then died. Setinas is known for conquering the countries called Mensan and Bernerya. This king also built a synagogue for the idol called Zufra. However, he destroyed the synagogue built for the idol called Zuhai. He also burned and annihilated the priests of that idol. He gathered them in the synagogue he had built for Zufra and burned them there.

Then he himself died.

After him, Anfias reigned for fourteen years. After Anfias, Kerfeytos reigned for twenty-eight years. As the Holy Book tells us, the king of Asrefas rose as an invader in his time. After Kerfeytos, Abbokos reigned for thirty-three years. After Abbokos, Kal'e Sibokos reigned for twenty-eight years. After Akaka'il Abbokos, Afestos reigned for twenty-six years. After Afelatos, Afrox reigned for thirty-three years. After him, Romulus reigned for thirty-eight years. While Romulus was in power, King David of Israel defeated Edom and Ammon, killing countless people from these countries. Those who survived fled to the land of Kittim.

Romulus gave the refugees a place on the coast of the sea. There, they founded a city and named it "Derso" after their leader who had escaped from David with them. Its former name was "Dur." The descendants of this man are from the Hadad tribe who lived in Armenia. After a short time, a source of weaponry (a place of death) appeared in this city of refugees. But after a short time, the sea swallowed and buried it.

These people whom David pursued had founded a second city.

However, the first city, founded in a place called Afosiy, is still known. The king of Afola, fearing that David would invade him, built a great wall around the city. The city's wall built by the king was about forty-five kilometers. He named the city within this wall

"Roma," because his name was Roma. This king was also known as Romanos at times. The people of Romanos were also called by his name because they were its neighbors, and they were Romans.

Even though he built this great wall, Romanos was not freed from his fear of David. He built a great synagogue for the idol called Mesheteri and destroyed the idol that had been built for the idol called Zuhura. This synagogue had been built by the king named Tinos.

When Ruflo died, Makwas reigned for forty-one years. After him, Tewkinos reigned for forty-nine years, Yuliyos for thirty-two years, Berko Bobos for thirty-seven years, Leyonos for thirty-four years, Terkiyos for thirty-five years. King Terkiyos was killed because he desired another man's wife among the Roman women. After Terkiyos forced the woman and took her from her husband, she stabbed herself in her stomach with a dagger out of anger and died by her own hand.

Understanding this, her father, husband, and brother waited for Terkiyos, hidden at the entrance of the synagogue, and killed him. Because of this, the people of Rome became rebellious when they reigned. Therefore, they said, "We don't need a king," and agreed not to enthrone one. They chose an ordinary man from among them and appointed him, naming him "Elder" instead of king. They also selected 320 people to lead them. The chosen ones were known for their integrity. In this way, they established a government.

The Romans were led in this manner for many years. Later, the first Caesar was appointed and declared himself king. From that time on, the people's choice was abolished, and as we will explain later, Caesars became the kings of Rome in succession.

However, they were led by elected leaders called elders for about 320 years. During these times, no one dared to defy the Romans. They gained great power to control all the surrounding countries and expel kings.

Finally, various peoples caused division in Rome. The Ionians and Alexandrians created strife between themselves. The Romans helped the Ionians, and the Alexandrians were defeated.

However, the Alexandrians quickly gained strength and took revenge on the Romans. The Romans, fearing, abandoned their country and fled to the sea area called Mebr. They released water from the sea to Rome through a canal, and Rome was encircled by a river. They also surrounded the city with iron. The iron-girt area was about 18 meters wide and about seventy cubits long.

They did this because they feared an invasion of their surroundings. When they heard that Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, had destroyed the Temple and taken the Israelites captive, their fear intensified. They sent tribute to him from where he was, so he would not come and invade them. They also expressed their submission to him. He was pleased and promised not to invade them. Because of this, Media and Persia lived in peace until they were divided.

The owner of this book says: "When the reign of the Chaldeans came to an end, the time came for God to judge them. He destroyed their kingdom. As the prophets revealed, God rose up against their kings. The Persians and the Medes quarreled. Again, the two reconciled, and King Kardian of Persia married the daughter of the king of Media. In this way, they formed a front to fight the king called Kardion. This king had a double name, Belshazzar, and he was the son of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon. His territory was Babylon."

They gathered an immense army to fight him and went to war. When Belshazzar heard that they were coming to fight him, he sent his army without going himself. Belshazzar's soldiers defeated both kings and pursued them, striking them until they were only a day's journey from their country.

When Belshazzar heard of their defeat, he sent a large army led by a thousand captains.

These armies arrived at night and engaged in battle with them.

They defeated the kings of Media and Persia. Belshazzar returned victorious and was happy. He entertained his armies with food and drink for many days. From much drinking, he himself became drunk and babbled much, praising his nobles. He also spoke excessively. He summoned the golden vessels his grandfather Nebuchadnezzar had brought from the Temple and drank from them. His officials and nobles drank from the Temple vessels as he did. From much drunkenness, they began to praise their idols.

May praise be to God! He was angry with Belshazzar and grieved over his audacity. He sent His angel and told him directly God's judgment and the downfall of his kingdom. Belshazzar saw a hand writing. It was writing on the wall. The hand shone with astonishing brilliance.

At this time, Belshazzar was greatly terrified. What was written was in Canaanite script, and the language was Hebrew. Because he was distressed, he called Daniel and had him interpret it.

Daniel told him, "Because you defiled the holy vessels of the Temple, God has become angry and sent His angel to reveal your error and downfall in writing. God has weighed you and found you wanting."

Belshazzar was greatly terrified when he heard what Daniel told him. His soldiers also fled to their homes in fear. Belshazzar rose and lay on his bed. His own servant came at night and killed him. He cut off his head and took it to the kings of Media and Persia. He narrated, one by one, what the angel had written and what Daniel had interpreted. When Belshazzar's severed head was brought to them, they thanked God and expressed their admiration for His power.

Because of this, King Cyrus of Persia was moved to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem that Nebuchadnezzar had destroyed. He decided to return the holy vessels that Nebuchadnezzar had taken captive from Jerusalem. He allowed the captive Jews to return to their country. King Cyrus of Persia and King Darius of Media went together to Babylon. They killed the people of Babylon. The prophecy that the prophets spoke concerning Kardion was fulfilled. God had already prophesied that He would destroy them because of the multitude of their sins.

After that, these kings of Persia and Media divided Babylon into two. King Darius of Media was old, so he died quickly. At this time, the people of Media and Persia agreed, and they decided that King Cyrus of Persia should rule both Media and Persia.

Media and Persia became one country.

In the first year after Cyrus united everything, he returned to his country and declared that any Jew who wished to rebuild the Temple that Nebuchadnezzar had destroyed could do so. He said, "I, Cyrus, being a servant of God, will use any treasures from my palace that can be used for the Temple's work. For it is God who gave me the power to defeat the Babylonians."

All the men rejoiced greatly after hearing what Cyrus said and thanked God. Many people went to the land of the Temple (the

holy land). With them went Ezra the priest, Nehemiah, Mordecai, and Joshua, all the captive scholars. They all went together and built the glorious house of the Most High God. They rebuilt its interior and exterior as before. They asked Cyrus to provide everything needed for the Temple service. Cyrus, according to their request, supplied everything necessary for the Temple. The people of Israel were able to live in this good condition until the fall of the Persian Empire. God strengthened the Persian Empire. The Persians became very powerful and controlled the kings of the world. The house of God was opened. As the prophet Isaiah revealed in his prophecy, Cyrus greatly helped the children of Israel because he did good for them.

The king of Shubta rebelled against the Persian Empire. However, Cyrus marched against him, killed him, and killed many of his country's people. He killed Shubta's family, his wife, and his children. Shubta's wife was called Bulideli. She had a strong house. Many sought refuge in her house to save their lives.

However, all the royal descendants were destroyed. After destroying everyone, he appointed one of his servants over that country and returned to his own land.

This king's wife, Bulideli, seeing the death of her son and the loss of her queenhood, gathered her husband's remaining soldiers in anger and fiercely waited for Cyrus in a place called Dipa until she died. She ambushed until most of Cyrus's followers had passed.

Cyrus remained in Gilah and sent most of his army ahead, beginning his journey. She openly found Cyrus with a few followers and killed them all. She cut off the head of the Persian king, Cyrus, tied it in a bag, filled it with blood, and said to him, "You, Cyrus, drink your fill of blood!" She also said, "You are ruthless when you slaughter people; you have no compassion, no

mercy." Cyrus's fate was sealed. His merciless slaughter of people led to his death. Cruel slaughter of humans is not permitted for human beings. It is beneficial for a person to know and fear God and to realize that He cares for His creation.

Therefore, may all of you follow God's law.

After Cyrus, his son Mekis reigned. When his kingdom was established and his throne settled, he went to the country where Busideli, who killed his father, was. He uprooted her and her family as well, leaving nothing to remember her by. After that, he marched against all who had rebelled against his father. After his father's death, he conquered and controlled everyone. His kingdom became firm, his power was strengthened, and his work became mighty. The Jews were very obedient to Cyrus. After him, the Persian kings also obeyed him in the same way.

The Persian kings, on their part, fully accommodated the wishes of the Jews. Everything necessary for sacrifices and other needs in the Temple was provided by the Persian kings. Cyrus initiated this for them. Therefore, the Persians greatly honored the house of God and received blessings from the house of God. During times of blessing in the Temple, they desired for their names to be mentioned. This custom continued until the time of Alexander.

After Alexander reigned, however, the situation of the Jews completely changed.

The reason for this was that "Alexander appointed a man named Haman to be above them and ordered them to bow down to him." At this time, Haman was known to be an enemy of the Jews. The man was an Amalekite by lineage. It is recalled that during the time of Saul, who was king of Israel, there was great enmity between the Amalekites and the Israelites. Saul, by God's command, had destroyed the Amalekites. From that time on, the

hatred between the two did not subside, especially between the tribe of Benjamin and the Amalekites, because Saul was from the tribe of Benjamin.

On the other hand, a Jew from the land called Gai served in King Ahasuerus's palace and refused to bow down to Haman. They said they would not give him honor. This Gai was from the tribe of Benjamin. This hatred, which had only been remembered in history for many centuries, flared up again, and Haman sought to completely destroy the Jews.

There were two people who were close to the king. The one mentioned above was Ahasuerus. The Ionians, to show their love, intended to kill the king. At this time, the Ionians were at war with Persia. Gai (Mordecai) knew of these two royal courtiers' plan to kill the king. He told this plot to his cousin, Esther. She, in turn, told the king what her cousin Gai (Mordecai) had told her.

These two men had prepared snakes to bite King Ahasuerus. Mordecai had told Esther all this plot, and she had told the king.

The king, finding it to be true, killed the two courtiers. He hung their bodies in the public square and ordered Mordecai's wisdom to be recorded in the king's book of records.

But this situation distressed Haman, and he developed great jealousy toward Mordecai. The king's courtiers became Mordecai's closest confidants and friends, more than anyone else. Haman began looking for ways to incite the king against the Jews, finding different pretexts. Haman, more than anyone else, gained the king's trust. Mordecai, on the other hand, hated Haman because of his Amalekite lineage. Mordecai was greatly distressed that Haman had managed to gain such governmental authority. Ahasuerus also remembered a dream he had when he

was king, in which he saw the earth shaking and two large snakes fighting each other.

Because of this, he dreamed of a great outcry. Many people gathered. They were prepared for destruction and evil. As the world was about to be destroyed, it cried out to God and pleaded for Him to save it. The world was engulfed in darkness. The kinship between the two intensified. One tried to swallow the other. The gathered people could not separate the two dragons.

The dragons continued their fight for a long time.

Again, he saw a spring of water. As the spring was about to dry up, a little water flowed between the two dragons. This small amount of water calmed the fight between the two dragons. The dragons reconciled, and the spring began to produce much water.

The sun rose, the world became light, and the darkness was dispelled. That small family was seen to multiply. The fear and terror that had lingered in the world were removed. Peace, truth, and righteousness prevailed in the world. All this was revealed to Mordecai a year ago.

Mordecai did not forget this vision. He waited patiently for it to be interpreted. At the time, he had told this dream to his father's brother's daughter, Esther. When Haman then rose up in hatred against him and his people, Mordecai told Esther, "The time has come for the dream I saw and told you years ago to be fulfilled. Now, first of all, plead with God. Then, go to the king and plead with him. Fall down and rise up, and rush to save your people."

Mordecai himself began to pray to God. He fasted, prayed, interceded with God, and gave thanks.

Mordecai's prayer was as follows: "Great God, Most High God, you know that I did not bow down to Haman out of respect. But I did not bow down to him because I feared You and Your kingdom.

I know that bowing down is due to You alone. If I were to approach another and bow down, I would anger You. I kept myself from him so that I might approach You. Only to You is bowing down due, and to You alone are prayers and supplications offered. If it were not for this, I would not have refused to bow down to Haman. I would have bowed down to Haman and made my people, the Jews, live in peace. I would have fulfilled all of Haman's will and protected the well-being of my relatives. I would have kissed the ground he walked on.

"Behold, I know that Haman has risen to destroy us. Therefore, I implore You to save us from this impending destruction. Cast him into the pit he dug. He has prepared a snare for Your servants. All of our eyes trust only in Your salvation. Do not forget the covenant You made with our fathers. Do not overlook our sin. Look upon our humiliation. Humiliation and lowliness are due only to God. You can help, so help us and save us. We are now in greater distress than ever before. We have no refuge other than You. Save us from our judgment and save us by Your power. Give us power over our enemies, and confound their counsel.

"O Lord, save Your chosen people from the Gentiles. When You give them over, let not our enemies say, 'They have no God,' and let them not boast in their idols. Shame them and make their faith vain. In this way, they will understand the emptiness of their gods. This will happen when they realize our salvation. Do not destroy the covenant You gave us to praise You. Let not Your praise diminish from our mouths. You are the Creator, praised by Your word, and You are praised by Your Spirit."

"...Change our mourning into joy, so that we may praise You and bless You and sanctify You, and that we may see Your help, and make it for our redemption and the grace that is upon us, that we

may live among all the Gentiles in all the countries ruled by King Cyrus, whose countries are Susa and Asq."

When the Jews heard of the conspiracy devised by Haman, they cried out to God. They cried to God in fear and trembling and pleaded with God to destroy Haman. Esther, for her part, interceded with God. Fearing this tribulation, she cast off her royal robes and her ornaments, put on sackcloth, and sprinkled dust on her head. She persevered in fasting and prayer, prostrated herself in tears, and called upon the name of the **Glorious and Most High God**. She said: "O God of Israel, O King of kings, O Ruler of all, it is in Your power to grant Your servant, me, victory. I have no other helper.

"O Lord, You know that I have been destined for captivity. I have lived in captivity since my childhood. I have lived in a foreign land. Captivity has greatly embittered me and has exhausted me with my father and mother. This king married me against my will. Now I am with him, and I live with those who are not my people. I am forced to unite with people who do not share my faith. But I have not changed my faith. The world or queenhood has not overcome me. I have not deviated from Your command.

"O Lord, You know where the place of this enemy of ours is. You also know that he has greatly striven to destroy us. And I, indeed, fear the destruction of my people and my relatives. I plead with You in intercessory prayer. My heart is burning, and I cry out to You. I ask for Your mercy. Help me, forgive me. I am poor, and I am wretched. If You allow my people to perish, kill me before I see their destruction. If You allow me to live in this world, then do not hand Your servants over to the enemy. You save people from the mouths of ravenous lions. In all our troubles, You have never held back from helping our fathers. You have helped us, and You

have protected our fathers throughout all generations. My God, O God, You are merciful. Do not abandon Your customary mercy that You always show us. Strengthen Your weak servant and comfort her weakness, for she has taken refuge in You. And soften this king's heart so that I may find favor with him and save my people. Protect me when I go to him for intercession. Make his heart turn back to us, to Your people, for the hearts of kings are changeable," she prayed.

After praying for three days, Esther put on her royal robes and her ornaments. She took her female servants, arranging for one to hold her and the other to hold the train of her gown, which was to be dragged along the ground according to royal custom. She appeared joyful, hiding her sorrow. She entered where the king was and stood before him, trembling. The king, for a moment, was angered by her daring to enter without being summoned. When she realized his anger, she was greatly terrified and leaned on her servants, remaining silent. In her heart, she cried out to God and pondered what she should do.

God saw the sorrow of her heart and forgave her. He granted her favor with the king. The king looked upon her beauty and had compassion on her. He removed his anger and allowed her to approach him. He loved her very much. Immediately, she pleaded with him concerning her people. He accepted her plea and did not put her to shame. God made everything right by her hand. Her father's brother's son, Mordecai, was calmed from his sorrow. The annihilation and destruction of Haman are written in the book of Esther. There is also a place where it is mentioned in the book of the Prophets.

From this time on, they were able to live in peace under the Persian kings. They lived in peace until the king named Darius II

reigned in Persia. Darius II defeated and ruled the Ionians. The Ionians remained subject to the Persians until Alexander, son of Philip, reigned.

However, Alexander, son of Philip, defeated the Persian king and freed the Ionians from Persian subjugation. He also subjected Darius and his army. Alexander ruled the whole world. Glory and praise be to God who grants kingdoms and power to whomever He wills.

The history of Alexander is found together with the history of Persia and the history of the Jews. On the other hand, the author of this book says: "Alexander's father, Philip, was known for his greatness among the Ionian kings. Philip conquered many countries and made them tributary to him. However, Philip remained king for only seven years. After seven years, he died.

The circumstances of his death are as follows: one of the government officials under him desired Philip's wife. This was Alexander's mother. He persuaded her to meet him. He said that to take her, he must kill Philip. Since it was not easy to kill him, he waited for an opportune moment.

Meanwhile, Macedonia was invaded by other kings. Philip's enemies invaded her. Philip sent armies led by his commanders against the foreign enemies. Alexander, on one side, led a war and was sent to fight. At this time, only a few soldiers remained in the city. The government official who desired Philip's wife and persuaded her to marry him was named Phares. An opportune time arose to kill Philip. He immediately took his friends and surrounded the palace. He beat Philip with a club and exhausted him until he collapsed, losing his life. However, he did not die quickly.

When the people in that country heard of this act, they were shocked. Alexander returned at this time from his military mission.

As he approached the city, he heard shouting. He inquired to know the situation. They told him about the danger that had befallen his father, and when he quickly entered the palace, he found his father stretched out on the ground. Immediately, Alexander killed Phares. Philip's severe beating with clubs was very intense. He struggled for a short time and then died.

Immediately, Alexander took over the kingdom and reigned. At this time, Alexander was a twenty-year-old boy. He was wise and intelligent. The famous philosopher Aristotle was his teacher of wisdom. Alexander's appearance was not like his father's or his mother's.

"Alexander's face was terrifying like a lion. His eyes were unique. His left eye was hawk-colored and looked upwards, while his right eye was black and looked downwards. His teeth were pointed like a dog's and were short. Because of this, when he bit people in his childhood, he would make them bleed."

When Alexander reigned over the Ionians, he became very terrifying. Previously, he had risen to fight King Darius of Persia before subjugating the surrounding kingdoms from among his servants, whom he appointed to various divisions. He traveled westward, conquered them, and made them covenant to pay tribute to him. He then selected and appointed his kingdom's army commanders.

After Alexander had completely controlled all those he thought might oppose him and had secured everything he suspected, he went to other nations. At this time, the nations Alexander marched against were under King Darius of Persia. He engaged in battle and defeated them. Then he went to the country called Sham. He

opened the "gates of forgiveness"—this was a trading port where ships were seized.

Alexander went to the Temple to fight the Jews, for they had refused to obey him. As he entered the Temple, he met a man dressed in white. This man was girded with a sword. This sword shone brilliantly. The man, with the sword in his hand, was about to strike Alexander. Alexander was greatly terrified. He understood that this man with the sword was an angel sent from God. He fell from his horse and said, "O Lord, my Master, why are you killing Your servant Semen?" The angel then said, "You are going to the holy place (the Temple). You are going to destroy the priests of the Most High Glorious God. You also intended to destroy the people of God.

"Before you destroy them, I will tell you one thing: God sent me when I heard that you would conquer all kings, and He sent me to help you control them all. But you must not fight the people of God." At this time, Alexander said to the angel, "O Lord, my Master, I have sinned. Forgive me. If it is Your will, allow me to return in peace to where I came from. And pray for me that God may forgive me."

The angel said to him, "Because you have confessed your sin and your error, I will forgive you. Now continue on your way. Go to the Temple. If you find a man there who looks like me, dismount from your horse and bow down to him. Do everything he commands you. Do not refuse him. If you do not obey him, you will be destroyed."

Alexander then rose from there and went to the Temple. When the Jews heard that Alexander was coming against them, they were greatly afraid. When the chief of the Jewish priests heard of his coming, he and the community held a fast and prayer to the Most

High and Glorious God, pleading for mercy from God so that they would not be destroyed. When they heard of his approach, they went out together to meet him. Their chief priest was at their forefront.

When Alexander saw the great Jewish priest, he thought he resembled the angel he had seen on the road. He also remembered what the angel had commanded him. Therefore, he quickly dismounted from his horse, bowed down to the ground, greeted him, and highly exalted him. Alexander's subordinate commanders saw this and were greatly astonished. They asked Alexander, "How can you, a king, bow down to this common man, who is one of your servants?" Alexander told them that the angel had appeared to him on the road and commanded him to do this. That great Jewish priest, in turn, humbly raised his hand to him in return. Since the meeting took place at a distance from the Temple, when Alexander returned from the reception, he went with them to the Temple. He entered the Temple and was greatly astonished by the Temple's arrangement and construction. He thanked the Most High and Glorious God. He offered many thanks to God for enabling him to see this holy place. However, Alexander asked the priest, "I must have my own image carved as an idol and placed here as a memorial." The priest said to him, "Such an image as you describe is not permitted to be placed in this holy house of God. But your portrait can be placed." A portrait had been placed before.

"If you allocate money to this Temple, the money will be used for the priests, widows, and orphans, and they can pray for you always. I will also make them pray for you. In this same year, when parents bring their newborn children to the house of God, I will call them 'Born in the time of Alexander' in remembrance of

you as children of the house of God. And when they enter the Temple, I will have them named after you. This will be a great memorial before God, and it will endure forever," he told him. Alexander agreed with the priest's words. He sent much money to the house of God and made the tithe a permanent payment to the Temple. Alexander told the priest, "Now I have risen to fight the king called Darius. Please ask God in prayer if He will permit this."

The priest said to him, "Do not go to war now. Return to your country, for God is with you and will grant you victory over Darius and his kingdom." This priest also called the prophet Daniel and had him prophesy. Daniel said that he saw a ram and a horned goat come and strike the ram.

The priest then interpreted Daniel's prophecy to Alexander and said to him, "The ram is King Darius, and the goat is you. Therefore, Daniel saw you striking Darius." Alexander's heart was strengthened by this. He ordered everything that had happened to him since he began his journey to the Temple to be written down.

It was written and sent to Rome and Macedonia.

Alexander left the Temple to fight Darius and reached the place called Nablus. Sanbalat, the Samaritan, welcomed him and paid him tribute. He hosted all his army well and gave him countless gifts. This Sanbalat asked Alexander to build a temple for him in the place called Mount Karmorin, whose special name is "Turbizil." The author of the book says that Sanbalat asked for a temple to be built because of his son-in-law, Manasseh. This Manasseh had been a priest in the house of God that was in this place, and Manasseh's wife was Sanbalat's daughter.

At this time, the Jewish chiefs had ordered all who had married women not of Jewish descent to divorce their wives. All, except for the priest Manasseh, had divorced their wives as commanded.

Manasseh, however, refused to divorce his wife, who was Sanbalat's daughter. Because of this, he had been removed from the priesthood. For this reason, Manasseh had gone to live in his father-in-law's country, with Sanbalat.

Because of the presence of the priest Manasseh, Sanbalat wanted to build a temple in his place, similar to the Temple in Jerusalem. His place was called Wurbizil. Sanbalat gathered people and told them, "This [Wurbizil] is chosen by the Glorious and Most High God." He also told them that Manasseh was a rightful priest and had not been removed. Alexander also agreed to have the temple built. However, he warned him not to do anything that the priest in the Jerusalem Temple would hate. Alexander continued on his way, and Sanbalat built a temple in Wurbizil. In this temple, he made his father-in-law, Manasseh, a priest. Sanbalat told the Jews, "This is the place God has chosen for Him to be praised and blessed, and for prayers and prostrations to be made to Him. This is what Moses meant in the Torah when he said, 'I will add my blessing in abundance.'" Some of the Jews accepted his words. They began to flock to the Wurbizil Temple with their offerings and tithes during their festivals and vows, and they stopped going to the main Temple.

Those who were zealous for the House of God began to belittle and speak ill of the old Temple. Much wealth accumulated in this new temple. The priests and their servants of this temple became very rich, leaving the Jerusalem Temple empty. Manasseh's prestige greatly increased. This continued for a long time. It is known that it continued until Hyrkanos, the son of Simon, became the high priest.

When Alexander now went eastward to fight Darius, he prepared for battle around the Euphrates River. When Darius heard of his

coming, he wrote him a letter saying: "From Darius, King of Kings, King of all nations, to Alexander the Macedonian: God has exalted my glory and praise and has made me supreme throughout the world. He has placed everything under my authority. How dare you, Macedonian, and your people, come to the Euphrates? Why did you come here without my permission?

"This audacity will not benefit you. You should not dare to challenge my friends. Just as servants wait on their master, you should have first pleaded with me to give you what you want. This act of yours will not benefit you now. Do nothing without my permission. I now command you to come to me quickly. You must not delay. If you do not accept my command, however, my anger will overcome you. But if you quickly accept my command and come to me, I will forgive your offense and treat you well."

The author states that Alexander was not alarmed by the letter Darius wrote. Instead, Alexander went with his army to where Darius was, and Darius, with a large army, met him. At this time, a great battle took place between them. On this day, the sun darkened, and thunder was heard. The Persian army was annihilated, and Darius fled and escaped. Alexander captured Darius's mother, daughter, and wife. He also took Darius's army and their possessions as plunder. Darius entered a house and hid. Alexander ordered the burial of the soldiers who had perished in the battle. After burying all the fallen, he stayed in Persia for a short time. Then, his subordinate and successor with authority came to him, and he ordered all the army to follow him. They advanced towards the country where Darius had fled. Alexander had wood cut and dragged by lions. When the lions dragged the wood, a lot of dust rose. Seeing the dust, Darius and his followers

thought it was due to the large number of soldiers, so they remained hidden in their compound without moving.

Alexander wanted to send certain messengers to Darius's location but suspected they might betray him. So, he himself put on royal clothing and went. When he approached again, he was dressed as a cupbearer, mounted on his horse, and approached the city. When the gatekeepers asked, "Who are you?" he replied, "I am Darius's messenger. Alexander sent me to speak with Darius." The gatekeepers told this to King Darius. Darius then let him in, and Alexander entered before Darius.

When Darius saw Alexander, he trembled, seeing his majesty, and was greatly afraid. After a while, he calmed down and asked, "Who are you?" Alexander replied, "I was sent by Alexander to you. Give him your hand in peace. Otherwise, he said, a worse tribulation awaits you." The author, however, states that Darius told Alexander, "You were able to speak with such boldness because you yourself are Alexander." Alexander then, astonished by Darius's words, replied, "I am not Alexander, but his messenger." Darius had him eat with him. However, when the wine server offered him wine, he did not drink it but poured it onto his clothes.

Darius, seeing this, asked, "Why do you do this?" Alexander replied, "Alexander's custom is to do this with drink." When Darius's soldiers saw the act, they knew it was Alexander. One of Darius's close associates said, "I know him. This is Alexander himself." Alexander heard him.

As Alexander tried to slowly leave with his cleverness, Darius had wine poured into a golden cup for him. However, Alexander went out through the back, killing the gatekeepers. Darius, hearing this,

sent his warriors to pursue him, but they did not find him. He had already gone far from the place before dawn.

Alexander continued his journey, which changed from a calm path to ice. He entered a large, wide river that had frozen over and began to travel on foot. When he reached the middle, the ice melted, and he could not cross on foot. But since he had a horse, he got on his horse and crossed the river.

Darius's soldiers had crossed over the calm water and pursued Alexander. However, when the ice melted, they could not cross the river. Again, when the river water turned to ice, a battle ensued, and Alexander's Greek followers defeated the Persians. Darius began to flee on foot on the calm river ice to save his life. The soldiers who survived followed him. But when they reached the middle, the ice melted again, and they drowned. Darius, however, did not drown and got out of the river, weeping. After getting out of the river, he wrote a letter to Alexander, saying, "I will give you much money, and release my mother, my wife, and my daughter from captivity, and do not destroy my country."

Alexander received Darius's message and said, "If Darius defeats me, his money will remain his. If I defeat him, however, everything will be mine." Having said this, Alexander spent the winter until the cold and icy months passed, for the cold could not move him. Darius, for his part, realizing that Alexander had not given up on him, sent to the Indian King Phares for help. Alexander, knowing that Darius was seeking help, began to pursue him with greater intensity. Darius's army was greatly afraid. They realized they could not fight Alexander, so they surrendered to Alexander. They killed their own king. When Alexander arrived, he found Darius fallen. He was still breathing, so Alexander felt sorry for him and wept over him. He dismounted from his horse, lifted him from

where he had fallen, and held him in his arms. He waited, weeping, until his life passed.

After Darius died, Alexander ordered him to be honorably embalmed, as kings are when they die. He also placed him in a coffin. Before his burial, he lined up his entire army to mourn him and paraded him through all the squares. He also gave him an honorable burial. He buried him in the special place where Persian kings are buried. Alexander also killed the soldiers who had killed Darius.

From this time on, there was no Persian official who opposed Alexander. All submitted to him. Alexander, having subjugated Persia, set out to go to India. The King of India waited for him, arrayed with many Indian soldiers mounted on elephants. Alexander's horses, having never seen elephants, shied away and fled. Alexander, having never fought enemies mounted on elephants, was not accustomed to elephants, and he used to give a lot of money to the house of God every year. He would give food to the poor and needy who resided around the Temple. He fulfilled the needs of the priests and other Temple workers. He performed all the good deeds that the Greek kings before him had done.

One author states that wicked people among the Jews told the good King Sarpator, "There are diamonds, pearls, and gold in the Temple. They are innumerable. All this should be kept in the palace, not in the Temple." In this way, they flattered the king. This king sent a messenger to the Temple.

The great priest of the Temple, named Hanania, along with the Jewish elders, received the king's messenger and asked him about his coming. King Sarpator explained in detail the reason for sending him. At this time, the great priest Hanania said to the

messenger, "There are no diamonds, pearls, or gold in the Temple. Only memorials given by the Persian kings and the Greek kings are found in the Temple. The remaining money is only money given for the sustenance of the priests and for the poor and needy. This money was given by the kings so that their kingdoms would be strengthened and so that prayers would be offered for them."

The priest Hanania also warned and threatened the king's messenger in the name of God not to try to take money from the Temple. However, the messenger paid no heed to the priest Hanania's threat. He ordered his followers to ransack the treasuries. This situation was made known to all the Jews in the area. They could not transfer the Temple's property elsewhere, for they feared the man, so they pleaded with God alone. They fasted, prayed, wept, wore sackcloth, and sprinkled ashes on their heads.

In this ritual of supplication, everyone, male and female, child and elder, participated without distinction. The great priest Hanania led this. The author of the book states, "When a messenger named Herod in his kingdom tried to enter the Temple with his followers, God made a terrifying sound. He threw him from his chariot and beat him. His followers lifted him from where he had fallen and brought him into his house. Because of this, he was unable to speak, and his tongue remained sealed for many days. He also could not eat food. When his people were troubled, they begged him to forgive them. Hanania also prayed to God and healed him from his illness. In a dream, he saw that 'God has heard the prayer of the priest Hanania and saved him, so go to Hanania and thank him.'" He went and did that. He also gave many monetary gifts to the house of God. And he did the same for Hanania.

After this, he went to Macedonia, and when King Sarpator heard what had happened to him, he was astonished. From this time on, King Sarpator of Macedonia honored the house of God. He greatly exalted it and increased the annual gifts he gave to the house of God. Others who heard of this miracle also caused the glory of the house of God to be exalted. They also presented gifts and other things to the house of God.

Ptolemy translated the four books of the Old Testament from Hebrew. He did this so that the Greek people could read them in their own language. Ptolemy loved wisdom. He lived in Egypt because the Egyptians had made him king. This king collected books from all the Jewish tribes.

He sent a messenger to the High Priest of the Temple, asking him to send learned men of the Torah. He also sent many gifts. One of the three was the priest Eleazar. This priest was learned in the Holy Scriptures. When the three arrived, each was given a house. He arranged for the three of them to translate separately so that they would not meet each other. He did this so that they would not consult each other during the translation. He also assigned Greek-speaking assistants to each of them.

The books translated by the three were presented to the king through Eleazar. All three read the translated books. The king was pleased and gave them much money. He also greatly honored Eleazar. Because of this, he released the Jews he had held in captivity and sent them back to their country. He made a large basin and had the map of the land of Egypt engraved on it. The basin was made of pure gold.

The Nile River was also drawn on the map, showing how it flows into Egypt. The way the Nile irrigates the land of Egypt was also depicted. He sent this golden basin as a gift to the Temple.

People lived for a long time without knowing the secret of this basin. This concludes the first part of what was written from the beginning. Now we will write the second part. To God be glory.

Amen.

This book describes what happened to the Jews during his reign.

The author states that Antiochus's palace was in Macedonia.

When King Ptolemy of Alexandria died, Antiochus fought and defeated the Egyptians. He conquered many powerful countries, including Egypt. All the powerful kings, including the Persian kings, submitted to him. Because of this, he became arrogant and proud. He ordered all kings to erect idols in his image. Antiochus said, "I am God," and ordered people to worship him. He sent soldiers in every direction to make people worship and prostrate themselves before him. All kings, except the Jews, were willing to prostrate themselves before him. The Jews, however, stood firm, saying, "We will not prostrate ourselves." In those days, fiery beings riding fiery horses were seen fighting each other in the sky above the Temple. It is said that this continued for forty days, visible in the air above the Temple.

There were three wicked priests in this Temple. Their names were Menelaus, Simon, and Alphimus. Each had friends from a country called Skai. These rebellious and wicked priests went to King Antiochus and told him that the Jews refused to accept his command and would not prostrate themselves before idols. These wicked and aimless priests carried out this act in order to be known by the king and become his close associates, but they felt no remorse for the destruction of their own people, the Jews.

Antiochus suddenly came to the Temple and killed many Jews. He enslaved the rest. Those who survived and had the chance to escape hid in a thick forest and stayed there. He appointed one of

his followers to the Temple; the appointed one was named Philip.

He ordered them not to observe the Sabbath, not to be circumcised, to eat pig meat, and to prostrate themselves before idols. He ordered that those who agreed should live in peace and those who refused should be killed. Although he ordered Philip to carry out all of this, the Jews refused. He killed those who refused and let those who obeyed live in peace. Philip found two Jewish women who had hidden their children in a secret place. He tied the children to their mothers' breasts, hanged them, and stoned them. The mothers were killed with their infant children in a horrific manner.

These treacherous and rebellious priests engaged in such actions, making the extermination of their own people their work. The great priest Eleazar, who had led the Alexandrian scholars in translating the Old Testament, was very old in Antiochus's time.

Philip brought him before him. Since he was a ninety-year-old man, he came by force. Philip said, "I have known you from old times, so fulfill the king's command so that you may end your old age in peace." But Eleazar replied, "I will not do what God dislikes."

Philip said, "Bring meat from your house that you have slaughtered yourself and eat it before me. At that time, I will eat other meat that you do not eat. In this way, I will make it seem as if you have not eaten pork. At this time, you will be saved from death." But Eleazar replied, "I have lived my life teaching and advising the Jews to live by keeping God's law and not to bow down to foreign gods. Now I am ninety years old and old. If I secretly bow down to idols but appear to publicly bow down to idols and eat pork, I will be leading them away from God.

Therefore, do not bother to keep me alive. If I die in my faith, I will be an example to the Jews and will find salvation in God."

Philip was very angry at this time and ordered him to be tortured. In his suffering, Eleazar said, "O Lord God, You are all-powerful.

Remove this suffering from me. I did not go according to Antiochus's command. I kept Your command and persevered in faith. I considered all suffering as nothing. Take me quickly so that the intensity of this suffering does not weaken me. Keep me from committing error." So he prayed.

God heard his plea and prayer and separated his soul from his body. He made him die in his faith. Eleazar became an example to many Jews by his wisdom and patience. God also heard his prayer and protected him.

People who were seven brothers and troublemakers told Philip that they would not prostrate themselves before idols. Philip then had the seven brothers taken to Antiochus. When Antiochus heard of their arrival, he ordered the eldest to come before him.

He came. When Antiochus ordered him to prostrate himself before idols, he refused. He said, "Since you are king, if you order us to obey your palace, we will obey and be subject. But we will not worship you. Only God is to be worshipped, and we will not prostrate ourselves before creatures, nor will we worship creatures."

Antiochus was enraged and made an iron pan burn with fire. He ordered his hands and feet to be cut off. After killing him in this way, he brought the second brother. At this time, the king's officials were seated on his right and left. They told him, "Accept the king's command so that the suffering that befell your brother may not befall you." This young man, however, said, "I will not abandon God and prostrate myself before man. Inflict no less

suffering on me than on my brother." After this, he approached King Antiochus and said, "You, rebellious, proud, greedy one, you have power over our flesh, but you have no power over our souls. Your suffering will pass. The place where we go, having received God's grace, will not pass. Do to us whatever you wish."

Antiochus immediately had him killed and brought the third youth. He said, "You enemy of God, your majesty and your savage acts do not terrify us. Do not think that you are doing what you are doing to us by your power. God wanted us to endure the suffering and for His power to be revealed. We, believing in God and strengthening our faith, can endure the suffering." When he said this, the king and his followers were astonished. He immediately had him killed. Then they brought the fourth one. He said before the king, "We surrender our lives and souls to the Glorious and Most High God. We receive our portion from Him. When salvation is not found by offering reasons, we stand before God and rejoice." The king then had him killed and brought the fifth youth. When he made him stand, he said, "You, wicked king, do not think that God has abandoned us. You have given us power over our flesh. He will crown us with eternal glory. Our power will increase with Him. You will receive your reward for the savage acts you commit. Our judgment will be passed on to your descendants." He had him killed and then brought the sixth youth. As soon as the youth arrived, he said, "I believe in the Most High and Glorious God. I take refuge in Him to forgive my sins. I will accept His command. The injustice you commit, being faithless, will judge you, and you will be uprooted from the world." When he finished, he had him killed.

After killing the six brothers, he brought the youngest child before him. At this time, his mother came with him to see what would

happen. She saw the bodies of her children but felt no fear or terror at all. The bodies of her children were scattered everywhere. To her last, seventh son, she said, "My son, if I am your mother who bore you and raised you, and if I have more compassion than any other person, I have nothing to fear in your actions. When I conceived you, I did not know what was in my womb. I would have wished to be one of you.

"But everything will be from the Most High God, for He is the one who created your souls and your flesh. He made you as He wished and brought you into this world. He gave you understanding and protected you from all destruction. He taught you His commands and kept His faith and law for you. He allowed you to sojourn in the world for a certain time. He gave you strength and made you tested by suffering. And you endured the suffering for His will. And you are found in God's will. And you stand in the path God has chosen for you, for He is your King and Creator.

"God knows what is good for you. I do not know what is good for you. Since I gave birth to you, I have not had a day when I rejoiced in you. I have rejoiced only today, for you have given your souls to God, for He is the one who created your flesh and your souls. You endured suffering and tribulation. You did this to keep God's law and faith. You bid farewell to this world without breaking God's command. You did not obey the rebellious. Vows and joy are due to you. You are victors. You are heirs of glory."

The author states that when Antiochus looked at this woman, she went out with her child. He thought she was terrified and that she grieved over her dead children. He also thought she would plead with him not to kill her last, seventh son. He presumed that she would persuade him that the child should obey the king's

command to save himself from being killed. But seeing the woman's steadfast endurance, he himself began to persuade the boy. However, although he tried to persuade the boy in various ways, he remained firm in his faith and would not turn back to him. When his attempts to persuade the boy failed, he returned to the mother and said to her, "You, woman, your children are all gone, and only this one remains for you. If he is killed, you will be left alone and childless. Therefore, teach him to accept my command so that he may live for you."

The woman said, "Give me the boy, and I will advise him alone when no one else is present." He allowed the boy to come close to her. When the boy came close, she kissed him and said, "My son, I love you above all. You must listen to what I tell you, for I carried you in my womb and nursed you at my breast. I am the one who taught you God's law, and you learned faith from me. If you do not wish to accept what I tell you, look at heaven and earth. Remember your God, who, after creating everything, created man from a small drop. He advised him to keep His command and made him live in a small world.

"God created man to keep His command in this world. When he departs from the world by death, he goes to God. And God will reward those who do good with good. If he does evil, however, He will lead him to suffering. My son, let your effort be to reach the immortal God. Do not fear this idolatrous king. Look at his name. Bring it to your mind. Do not be terrified by his majesty. Die firm in God's command. Die the death your brothers received. Then you will go to eternal joy. Let your heart not stray from God, not even for a moment."

After much counseling, Antiochus, presuming that his mother had persuaded him to accept his command, called the boy to him. He

asked him, "Have you accepted your mother's advice, which urged you to return from your foolishness and accept my command?" The boy replied, "I will obey God, not you. I will worship no one but God. I will not prostrate myself before idols. I will prostrate myself only to Him. I am in a great hurry to reach my brothers. If you are cruel to us, your cruelty will remain for your soul. If you do good, it will also be for you. Your future destiny will be corrupted. Your power will not help you escape from God's hand. We know that God's wrath will pass over those who keep the faith. God can send judgment upon you in the world. And before you go to Him, suffering will come upon you, and you will die a bad death." He replied with steadfastness. After listening to the child's words, Antiochus was greatly enraged. He ordered him to be killed in a worse and more horrific manner than his brothers. His mother prayed to God to unite her with her children in death and immediately died. The child was also killed, and the mother and children went together to God. Antiochus returned to the Temple and ordered Philip, whom he had appointed, to utterly destroy the Jews unless they accepted his command. In this way, Philip hunted down and massacred many Jews.

The first to rise from the Hasmonean family was Mattathias. Mattathias, son of John, was a righteous man. He fled from Antiochus's cruelty into the forest, and about seventy Jews followed him. Mattathias was of Greek descent, but the oppression inflicted upon the Jews greatly saddened him, and he became zealous for God.

Antiochus made sure he was far from the Temple and secretly sent messengers to the land of Judea. He announced that he cared for the welfare of the Jews. He previously advised them to maintain their zeal for God and urged many to gather from

wherever they were. He called upon all who had strength to rise up and take revenge on Antiochus. Many Jews also understood that they must unite to defeat the Greeks.

Philip, who was appointed to the Temple, realizing Mattathias's uprising, rose to fight him. He then discovered that many Jews were hiding in a cave and ordered them to come out. The Jews, however, said that since it was the Sabbath, they would not move.

He then suffocated them with smoke in their hiding place.

Children, elders, women, and men, a thousand people in total, died together in the cave.

The one who caused these people to be massacred was a Jew who had betrayed his Judaism and sided with the Greeks. This Jew, to please the Greeks, slaughtered a pig and offered it as a sacrifice to the idol temple built by the Greeks. He did this to provoke Mattathias. When all this was happening, Mattathias stood and watched, and out of zeal for his faith, he struck the Jew who had sacrificed to the idol with the sword he carried. He struck him once and cut off his head. He then also cut off the head of the official who had allied himself with the wicked Jew.

When the Jews saw his boldness, they quickly gathered and confronted the Greek army. God granted victory to the Jews. Many Greeks were killed, and the rest fled. Mattathias, pursuing and ambushing them at every turn, along with the Jews, annihilated many Greeks. The scattered Jews, hearing of Mattathias's uprising, returned from their places of exile and lined up with Mattathias. The Jews became very numerous.

The day of Mattathias's death arrived, and he called his five sons and said, "My children, if we believe in God and entreat Him, and if we strengthen our faith and draw near to Him, He will stand with us. Therefore, believe in God and rise up against your enemies.

So, rise to fight the enemy for God and for faith. If you die fighting for your faith, you will go to everlasting life. If you win, God's grace will abound for you." Thus he advised them, and he died.

His son Judah reigned in his place.

The story of Judah, son of Mattathias (Mattathias), is presented as follows: He is the second of the Hasmonean lineage. The author states that after Mattathias (Mattathias) died, his children kept their father's command. Judah, leading his brothers, prepared to fight the Greeks. Philip, hearing of the Jewish uprising under Judah's leadership, sent a large army to fight them, but the Jews defeated him.

Judah became very strong. Antiochus first heard of Mattathias's movement, and then Judah's. He also heard again that Judah had defeated the Persians. His son's name was Aphdir. Aphdir was appointed in Macedonia. He had a man named Libstayos from his family assist him. The assistant's name was "Libstayos."

Antiochus ordered Libstayos, along with renowned Greek leaders known as Safabor, Tilimbe, and Zerod, to eradicate the Jews from their roots, and he sent them.

When these Greeks marched against the Jews, the Edomites and Philistines voluntarily joined them to fight the Jews. Passersby also went along to buy cheaply from the plunder taken from the Jews. When the Jews, with their leader Judah, son of Mattathias, heard of the Greek uprising against them, they gathered at the House of God and ordered every Jew to fast and pray. They sprinkled ashes on their heads and lay on the ground. They cried out to God, "Save us from our enemy."

After their supplication, Judah organized leaders, dividing them into groups of hundreds, fifties, and tens. He proclaimed that any fearful person should not join the battle. Most turned back out of

fear, and Judah was left with three hundred men. These three hundred Jews, however, were valiant and heroic. When he saw the large number of Greek soldiers, he was alarmed and separated himself from his people, falling to the ground and weeping before God. As he prayed, he said, "O Lord God, power is Yours. Give us strength against our enemies. Help us, Your weak servants."

When Judah finished his prayer, he ordered the priests to beat the Temple drums. He also ordered others to shout. By God's power, they defeated them. Many Greeks perished in the battle, and many were captured. The rest fled. Judah seized the money that merchants had brought to buy the captured Jews and distributed it to the poor. All the Greeks who had come assigned to the three leaders were destroyed. Philip, who was trusted by Antiochus and committed many atrocities against the Jews, entered a house and hid. Judah set fire to the house where Philip was hiding. Philip was immediately consumed by the fire. Seeing the atrocities committed against Eleazar the priest and other Jews, God afflicted him a little.

One of the Greek invaders named Ner, returned to Macedonia and told his commander Bisawos everything that had happened.

The same injustice that the Greeks had inflicted was inflicted upon him. When the war ended, he began to bury the dead. With them, he found idols. Other Jews also found idols with the corpses. Since the idols were made of gold, they hid them wherever they were.

Judah advised the Jews, saying, "Blessed is the God who knows all that is hidden, for He has revealed what is hidden to His servants, so that His servants may understand and know, and that they should worship Him, and not worship foreign gods, and not

worship any other god besides Him." After this, he warned them to worship only the Most High and Glorious God. He told them that foreign worship should not remain in their conscience and that they should worship Him alone with a pure conscience. Then he returned to the Temple.

Antiochus went to Persia to fight the Persians. The Persian people awaited him with a strong army. He was defeated in battle and returned to his country in flight. Judah heard of Antiochus's shameful return from Persia after his defeat. Antiochus, hearing of the victory the Jews had gained over his army, became extremely angry. He heard all that Judah had done. In his rage, he blasphemed God's faith and uttered excessive threats and pride.

He immediately set out with a large army to destroy the Jews. God, however, observed his boasting and pride and allowed him to be destroyed. He saved His people from Antiochus. God struck Antiochus with a severe skin disease. Even while afflicted with this severe skin disease, he did not want to repent. He continued his journey to destroy the Jews. But his disease worsened. His body rotted and was infested with worms. The stench of his body was so repulsive that his close friends could not approach him.

He exerted much effort for doctors to heal him, but he did not recover at all; instead, it worsened.

Finally, he realized that this was a punishment from God for his denial of Him. At this time, he tried to express his submission to God. He returned from his madness and believed in the Most High and Glorious God. He testified to God's omnipotence, supremacy, and skill. He said, "I lived in grave error and much sin. But today I know that the true God is God alone. I realized that He alone makes the powerful rich, the sick healthy, and that He alone humbles and exalts, and that He alone humbles the strong."

"I am afflicted with punishment from God for my transgression, and I understand that I deserve it. For I have been arrogant and have destroyed His servants. But from today on, I will intercede with God." Then he continued, "O Lord, forgive me for the transgressions I have committed. Accept my repentance. Help me to find healing. I will not try to do what You hate. I will do good to the Jews as much as I have wronged them. I will try to build Your Temple with gold and silver. I will adorn the floor of the Temple with precious cloth. For the glory and supremacy of Your kingdom, I will stop enslaving people."

God, however, seeing the injustice and paganism he had practiced and the transgressions he had committed, did not accept his repentance. He added affliction upon affliction. His intestines tore and dragged, and he died of a horrific disease. He was buried on the road. After him, his son reigned and was called Antiochus, after his father.

There is a day called Hanukkah. After Judah, son of Mattathias (Mattathias), completed his work, he explains the reason for the story of this supplication. It is recalled that Judah returned to the Temple after defeating the three (Seleucus, Philip, and Herod).

Upon returning to the Temple, he spent the entire night demolishing the idol altars that Antiochus had built. He completely removed all idol temples around the Temple. He completely removed anything accumulated by the Greeks that God did not permit.

He washed the Temple walls, its roof, and its floor with water, for a pig had been sacrificed there by Antiochus's command. After the sacrifice, the pig's meat had been allowed to spread throughout the Temple. All the holy parts were defiled by the pig's meat.

Judah finished the work of cleaning the Temple and built a new altar. He also placed incense and offerings upon it. Following this, the people of Israel made a vow. They presented their pleas to God. They implored God to send fire to the altar. God's omnipotence was seen at this time. God heard their pleas and fulfilled their desires. Fire appeared on the stone and burned the wood and the sacrifice.

This fire remained on the altar for many years without extinguishing. It continued to burn without ceasing until the Temple was again destroyed. The people celebrated the feast for eight consecutive days for the building of the altar. This feast is known as Hanukkah. The first day of the feast was celebrated on the twenty-fifth day of the month called "Kislev."

During these eight days, the people of Israel continuously gathered for prayer, supplication, and to honor God. They remembered the power Antiochus had shown. They decided that these eight days should be days of thanksgiving to God every year. The feast remained permanent for many generations.

This Lysias is Antiochus's grandson, the son of Aphdir. Aphdir became a military leader. Aphdir (Antiochus's son) heard of Judah's actions and sent his nephew, named Lysias, to destroy the Jews. He surrounded one of the Jewish countries, cutting off its entry and exit points. The country was called "Beth-Zur." The inhabitants of this city, the Jews, suffered greatly because they could not escape. They were tormented by hunger.

Judah heard of the situation and ordered his people, the Jews, to pray and entreat God, and to plead with Him to give them the power of victory. After fasting and prayer, he led the Jewish army to fight the Greeks. The Jews were afraid when they saw the large number of Greeks. At this time, Judah saw a man sitting on

a fiery horse, and his clothing shone like lightning. The man held a spear in his hand.

This angel pointed towards the Greeks and was seen preparing to strike them. He knew that this angel had come to destroy the Greeks and had been sent by God. With this, his heart was strengthened, and with full faith, he rose at night and, under Judah's leadership, confronted the Greeks. They scattered them like leaves from wherever they were. Many Greeks were killed. God instilled fear and terror in the Greeks. All who survived fled in every direction. Their leader, Lysias, began to implore Judah and wanted to establish peace with him. He explained to Judah that the Greeks would no longer consider the Jews as enemies, that they would honor and protect their faith, and that no one would invade them. Judah replied, "If Aphdir, Antiochus's son, who sent you to fight us, agrees to this, I too will submit to peace."

Lysias wrote a letter to Aphdir to support the agreement. In the letter, he expressed the Jews' steadfastness and strength. He also added that many Greek soldiers had been annihilated in the battle. When Aphdir saw the letter, he was very pleased. He wrote a reply letter to Lysias, strongly encouraging him to continue on the path of peace he had started and to promise that they would honor their laws and faith and that no one would invade them.

On the other hand, Antiochus's son Aphdir, through the messenger Lysias, explained to the Jews and their high priests that a peace agreement had been established with them. Peace was established between both sides, and the Jews began to live in peace and health. The Jewish people greatly honored Judah, son of Mattathias (Mattathias), because through his efforts, they had been able to achieve peace.

The history of the tribe of Kittim is mentioned in the title of this book. Now, it will be discussed in detail. These are the people who settled in Rome and its surroundings. In this era, Rome had reached a very high level of power. When the prophet Daniel prophesied about Rome, he said that Rome would be the first among the four kingdoms and would have power. The Romans defeated the Greek kings and stripped them of their glory. They also defeated the kings of Africa with all their glory. They defeated the great and powerful kings of the nations.

In Africa, there was a king named Abibal (perhaps Hannibal of North Africa?). Abibal was a fearsome and majestic leader with a large army. His capital city was called Carthage. This Abibal defeated many kings and ruled over them. Then he advanced to take control of the Roman territories. When he reached a country called Amtaria, the Roman army came to fight him. But Abibal, leading his army, fought and defeated them. The war continued for ten years without interruption. The Roman people perished in the war. Finally, Abibal conquered the Romans. He then advanced to Rome and surrounded the city of Rome.

With his army, he built fortifications around the city of Rome and waited for the city gates to be opened to him. The people of Rome suffered greatly from hunger. Because of this, the people were willing to submit to him. There was a man named Sakia in the city.

This man was known for his wisdom and perseverance. The Roman people consulted Sakia, saying that it was better to submit to Abibal than to perish from hunger.

Sakia, being an elder, was chosen by the people to govern Rome.

He went to the official who had authority below the elders and gathered three hundred and twenty men. He asked them, "Do you truly agree to surrender to the enemy?" They replied, "We cannot

withstand Abibal, so what should we do?" Sakia told them, "Be patient for a little while, and I have something I will do." Then he said, "Choose strong soldiers for me, and I will go and take control of the empty country of Africa."

Sakia said this because he understood that since Abibal had gone to Rome with his entire army, this country was without soldiers. So Sakia said, "When Abibal hears that the country of Africa has been invaded by an external force, he will abandon the siege of Rome and go to liberate his invaded country. And you will be free in this way." The people of Rome gladly accepted Sakia's advice.

They gave Sakia thirty thousand soldiers.

Sakia secretly left with thirty thousand soldiers, went to Africa, and invaded the country. He defeated and killed Abibal's brother, Astrobulus, who had been governing without any soldiers. He cut off his head and returned to Rome. Climbing onto the city wall of Rome, he shouted and threw his brother's head at Abibal. Abibal was greatly saddened when he saw his brother's head. However, he swore that due to the difficulty, he would not move from his position until the people of Rome surrendered to him. He threatened to destroy the city of Rome. Sakia, for his part, besieged Carthage, the capital of Africa, causing its people to suffer. This city was where Abibal's palace was located.

The people of Carthage sent a message to Abibal, saying, "We are in trouble, we are besieged. The destruction of our city and our annihilation await us. We cannot fight Sakia and his army. All that is left for us is to open the gate and surrender the city to the enemy."

When Abibal heard the message, he gathered and killed the people he had captured as prisoners from the Romans. He then returned from Rome by ship and sailed back to his country, Africa.

He found Sakia, who had taken control of all strategic locations suitable for war. Abibal engaged him in battle. Abibal was defeated and fled to Egypt. Sakia, however, pursued and captured him. He brought him back to Africa. In Africa, he killed Abibal and made Africa his territory.

The greatness of the Roman Empire began from this point. The Roman Empire gained supremacy over the whole world. In that era, no one could equal the Romans.

The elder who governed the Romans, along with his subordinates, sent a book to Judah, son of Mattathias, who was leading Israel. The book contained the following message:

"Greetings to you, Judah. We have heard that you, the people of Israel, are conquerors, and we are pleased about this. Therefore, it is our desire that you establish friendship with us, the Romans."

"We have heard that you have established friendship with King Antiochus of Greece. We are superior to him. These Greeks have committed atrocities against you. Antiochus himself has committed many atrocities against you. He has attacked you and committed injustices against you. We have set out from Antioch and are prepared to fight the Greeks. We now wish to know your identity. If you are with us, join us. If you say you will be with the Greeks, let us know."

"This message, detailed above, is from the Roman elder leader and his subordinates to Judah, the war leader, and to all the Jews. We, the Romans, wish for you to align with us and befriend us. If a land or sea war arises against us, we want you to help us. And if an enemy rises against you, we will align with you and fight for you. If an enemy rises against us, Judah, with his army, will align with us. And if an enemy rises against the Jews, we, the Romans, will align with you and fight for them. We, the Romans,

desire a reply to the letter we have written. I, the Roman elder leader, and 30 subordinate officials have written this."

Aphdir, Antiochus's son, was greatly upset and distressed when he heard of the Jews' power and Judah's friendship with the Romans. He had previously established friendship with Judah, but now he broke that friendship. He sent his father's brother, Lysias, with a large army to fight the Jews. Under the leadership of the Greek Lysias, they besieged the House of God.

Judah heard of the Greek invasion. He gathered his people and the elders of the Jews and entered into fasting and prayer. They offered sacrifices to God. After fasting and praying, they rose to fight the Greeks. Because God helped them, they killed many Greeks. The remaining Greeks fled. Aphdir heard of the defeat and annihilation of his people. However, because he believed the matter, he was greatly distressed because the Roman Dusmas, son of Selpapos, was preparing to invade Macedonia through Caesarea.

Judah hastened to establish peace with Aphdir. Aphdir and Judah met and established peace between them, with Aphdir's father's nephew, Lysias. The Greeks promised that they would not fight Judah to the end. Aphdir gave a lot of money to the Temple. He visited Jerusalem and returned to Macedonia. Judah, for his part, entered the Temple and offered thanks to God for the mercy he had received from God and for being saved from war. He did good to the people.

The author of the book narrates: "Among the Jews who acted as informers to Antiochus, causing the Jewish people to be annihilated, one was Bilaos, one of the three evil men. He went back to Aphdir (Antiochus's son) and advised him to destroy the Jews. It was Bilaos who caused Aphdir to break the covenant

previously established between the Jews and Aphdir. Later, however, Aphdir greatly regretted breaking the covenant." When Bilaos, one of the three evil Jewish informers who incited the destruction of their own Jewish people, heard of Aphdir's anger, he was greatly alarmed. Aphdir tied Bilaos, who had led him to error, by his hands and feet, took him to a high place, and threw him to the ground, where he died. He died a terrible death.

God brought him to disgrace and suffering.

When Aphdir established peace with Judah, son of Mattathias, and returned to Macedonia, Matthias, son of Aphrophos the Roman, came to him (having set out from Rome). He brought a large army to fight Aphdir. Since Aphdir could not withstand Matthias, he was defeated and fled. Aphdir's paternal uncle, Lysias, however, fought Matthias and defeated and killed him.

Then he went and settled in Antioch. It has been repeatedly stated that there were three informers among the Jewish priests who had arisen from Antiochus's time. One of these evil priests was killed by Aphdir. The second priest met Demetrius and, weeping, said, "Judah and his like have unjustly killed us among the Jews and have driven us from our homes and property. They did this because we abandoned their faith. They rose up and destroyed us for following your faith. Now, O King, help us and make us live in peace." He spoke many things and uttered many cunning lies to incite Demetrius to seek revenge and fight them. Demetrius sent his subordinate official, Biphabor, to the Temple to seize Judah. From a distance, without approaching the Temple, Biphabor sent a message, pretending to come in peace, asking Judah to come and meet him. Judah came out with a large army to receive Biphabor with honor. He prepared to give him a reception of honor and joy.

At this time, Biphabor did not show any intention of seizing Judah or asserting dominance over him. He was confused. On the contrary, Judah and Biphabor met and exchanged ideas. Biphabor entered the Temple with Judah. Great love developed between Judah and Biphabor.

The treacherous priest, whose name was Alqimos, realized that his treachery was futile when he heard of their peace and harmony. He returned to Antioch and met King Demetrius. He continued his treachery with even greater intensity, deliberately rising up with envy to destroy the Jews. He began to carry out his wicked plan, saying, "Biphabor is disobedient to you; he has betrayed you. Therefore, he has completely abandoned seizing Judah and bringing him to you for judgment."

Demetrius, hearing the words of the treacherous Alqimos, sent a message that if Biphabor did not seize Judah wherever he was and bring him bound to Antioch, he would be whipped. The message reached Judah before it reached Biphabor. Judah then left the country, pretending that opponents had risen against him in the vicinity and that he was going to fight them. He settled in a country called Sebastia. Biphabor, however, did not know all this. When Demetrius's letter reached him, he wanted to seize Judah, but he could not find him. He also did not know where he had gone, so he thought he was hiding in the Temple. He told the priests, "Bring Judah to me." The priests replied, "Judah is not with us, and we do not know where he is." At this time, Biphabor became extremely angry. He poured out bitter reproach and rage mingled with insult upon the priests. He spat on the House of God and on them. There were many houses within the Temple precincts where various services were conducted. He ordered these houses to be ransacked by his soldiers. At this time, great

suffering and tribulation befell the Jews. Judah, from his country of Sebastia, heard of the suffering his people, the Jews, were enduring and sent a message saying, "Do not commit atrocities against my people to find me. I am not around the Temple; I am in a distant place. If you want to, come out there, and we will meet outside that place."

Biphabor set out with his army to meet Judah. Due to his treachery, he also blasphemed God, the Merciful and Almighty. He blasphemed God's religion and the Temple. He also insulted and belittled the people of Israel. Judah, hearing his blasphemy, his heart burned with love for God. He appealed to God and called upon God, saying, "O Lord, You destroyed Sennacherib's army. His army was numerous. You also said through the prophets that Sennacherib's army would not enter the Temple. Now I entreat You to destroy this treacherous enemy, for he has blasphemed You and Your sanctuary, and he has changed Your faith. Hasten Your wrath upon him and swiftly bring down Your plague upon him." Thus he prayed.

Then Judah and Biphabor met. Judah fought and killed him. Most of his army was killed. Those who survived fled. The Jews, too, came out from wherever they were and killed Biphabor's soldiers wherever they reached. Judah and his followers returned to the Temple with great joy. They thanked God for the mercy He had shown them. Judah decided that this day should be a day of joy and triumph and should be celebrated annually.

Remembering the day, the Jewish people continued to praise God by being present in the Temple every year. This day was the thirteenth of Hedar. Judah ordered Biphabor's head to be brought from the altar where it had been placed. He hung it in the place

where Biphabor had blasphemed God and the Temple. Since this place was near the Temple, he named it Biphabor's Gate.

On the day Biphabor was killed and Judah returned to the Temple, for the second time, while he was on a ship, a man named Niphros, one of Rome's great officials, came with a large army. The army numbered about three thousand. His purpose was to fight Judah. Judah, at this time, was in a country called "Lysan" with three thousand soldiers. Judah's three thousand soldiers were cavalry. Therefore, when they heard of the Roman Niphros's arrival, they rode away on their horses and fled. Only three hundred men remained with Judah. His brothers, Simon and John, were also with him. These brothers of Judah rose to fight Niphros. The Roman Niphros, however, engaged them in battle from two directions. Niphros and the soldiers under his command engaged Judah and his men. The place where the battle was opened is called Azdid. He did not know that Niphros's second army was in another direction, led by his officials. The place where this army was entrenched is called Depot. At this time, Judah was surrounded on both sides, and much fighting took place. Judah died in this battle. His brothers, Simon and John, buried him next to Mattathias's grave. They and their fellow Israelites mourned him for many days. Judah's reign lasted seven years. After him, his brother Jonathan reigned.

The father of Judah and Jonathan, Mattathias, was of the Hasmonean tribe. When Judah was killed in battle, Jonathan went to the Jordan. As the Roman Niphros pursued him, he crossed the Jordan and went to another place. He entered a forest called Shabe. His soldiers also gathered there. Niphros's soldiers greatly distressed Jonathan's soldiers.

Because they were unable to move freely, they came out secretly and surrounded Niphros's soldiers. God instilled fear in Niphros's soldiers. They fled from Jonathan's soldiers. Niphros also fled with them. Jonathan pursued and captured him. He wanted to kill him. But Niphros pleaded with him not to kill him and swore that he would not fight him to the end.

He begged him to release and free his captured soldiers. He did as he said. He released both him and his soldiers. Niphros returned to Rome with his soldiers. Jonathan, on the other hand, died of illness without a long delay. After him, his brother Simon was appointed.

Simon, son of Mattathias, is the fourth of the Hasmonean princes.

When Simon, son of Mattathias, was appointed, all of Judah's army, who had rebelled after Judah's death, were made to obey.

He established a just administration for his people, the Jews. Demetrius, son of Sophiliapos, who made Antioch his base, sent an army to fight Simon. Simon ordered his army to encamp in two directions. The second division was led by his son, and the second division was led by him. Simon defeated Demetrius's soldiers. As the battle intensified, on the other side, the army led by his son attacked Demetrius's army. Demetrius was defeated and fled. Most of his army perished in the battle. Demetrius did not return again to fight the Jews. In Simon's time, the Jews found peace. Simon peacefully led the Jews for eight years.

His son-in-law, named "Bilmai," suddenly rose during a meal and killed Simon, his wife, and his daughter. After Simon, his son Hyrcanus was appointed. He also had a double name, John. This John was named Hyrcanus by his father, Simon, because he killed a strong man named Hyrcanus while his father was in office. He was called Hyrcanus because this Hyrcanus was very strong.

Hyrchanus is the fifth prince of the Hasmonean princes. Hyrchanus learned of the wrong committed by Bilmai. He seized Bilmai's mother and sister. Bilmai, however, had already fled and gone to Gaza. Hyrchanus pursued him to kill him, but his own residents defended him and prevented him from killing him. Bilmai again settled in a place called Daku in Gaza.

Hyrchanus returned to the Temple. He took his father's office. He organized his father's army and marched against Bilmai. Bilmai had married Simon's daughter. Hyrchanus tried to break into the fortress where Bilmai was and seize him. Out of fear, Bilmai placed Hyrchanus's mother and brothers on the fortress.

Hyrchanus's mother said at this time, "You should not spare this killer of your father." As he was preparing to kill him, the feast of the Passover arrived. Hyrchanus went to the Temple to celebrate the feast. Bilmai, finding a favorable time, killed Hyrchanus's mother and brothers and fled to another country.

At this time, Matthias, son of Alpaphos, rose to avenge Simon for killing his soldiers. When he heard of Simon's murder, he went to the Temple where he was. He rose to fight the Jews. It had been four years since Matthias had taken control of Rome. Hyrchanus, on the other hand, was only one year old. Hyrchanus sent word to Matthias, saying, "I am celebrating the feast of Passover, so refrain from starting a war and wait for us, for I am offering thanks to God."

Matthias responded to Hyrchanus: "Your ancestors were strong, and they fought with God's help. You, however, are weak. Therefore, I will not wait for you. I will come to fight you. You have not fought for your faith. You have made friendship with us without fighting. You have made friendship with me in good faith and have given me many gifts. But you have killed my soldiers and have

done many bad things to us. So I will not keep my promise to you, and I will destroy you all. I will avenge the blood of my soldiers."

Matthias, with a large army, went to fight Hyrcanus. They engaged in battle at a place called Azaz. Hyrcanus was defeated and fled. Matthias pursued him, but he could not catch him. Hyrcanus hid in a house. Matthias returned, leaving Hyrcanus hidden in the house.

Matthias gathered the people of Gaza and went to fight the people of Egypt. The people of Egypt, hearing of his arrival, gathered their army and fought him. Matthias returned to Rome after being defeated.

In this era, the Jews were divided into three groups. One group was called **Pharisees**, meaning "the separated ones." The second group was called **Sadducees**. These were from the lineage of Zadok. The third group was called the **Essenes**, the meaning of which is "the pious." These people who held to the third group were those who served the faith. The Sadducees hated them, and there was enmity between them. The **Mitzelah** were those who were hated by the Sadducees. Hyrcanus was initially of the Mitzelah group but later joined the Sadducees' group and hated the Mitzelah. To make this known, Hyrcanus hosted a grand dinner for his chief officials, and since the Mitzelah tribes were in power, Hyrcanus participated in the feast with them. The Mitzelah were wise, and Hyrcanus said to them, "From today onwards, I have become one of your disciples, and I will accept your counsel and not reject it. When you see error in me, advise me and turn me back from error, and reveal the truth to me, for it is proper for you to do this, and I will do nothing to anger you." They said to him, "O King, you are good, and may God save you from error, for God has gathered and given you praise, kingship,

and priesthood." Among them was a wise man named Eleazar, a man of great counsel. Hyrcanus said, "Behold, I will counsel you and we will keep you from your errors. If you are willing to accept our counsel, kingship is enough for you; let the priesthood be. For you should not be king and high priest, and your mother was captured during Antiochus's time. She was captured before she conceived you. The son of a captive cannot be high priest and cannot enter the Holy of Holies." At this, the Mitzelah people remained silent, the book says, for their words were true.

Hyrcanus was disciplined by this, and his joy turned to sorrow. At this, there was a rich man from the Sadducee group named Jonathan. This man understood that the Mitzelah people did not truly love him. He revealed to him, "Now my words have come true. If the Mitzelah loved you, they would not have allowed Eleazar to speak to you so boldly."

Hyrcanus ordered the Mitzelah tribe to pass judgment on Eleazar for speaking what he did. Hyrcanus wanted the Mitzelah to sentence Eleazar to death. However, they only sentenced him to forty lashes. For this reason, Hyrcanus joined the Sadducee religion. He developed a strong hatred for the Mitzelah and publicly forbade anyone from accepting their teachings. He killed most of those who did not accept his command. Most Jews followed the Mitzelah way, so suffering intensified among the Jews.

Before this, the Jews loved Hyrcanus. The Hasmonean tribes were his tribes. Since these tribes were loved among the Jews, and Hyrcanus was of their tribe, the Jews loved him. From the time Hyrcanus joined the Sadducee group, having previously been a member of the Mitzelah, he killed most of the Jews who were of the Mitzelah group. He himself became the leader of

strife, deliberately causing the Jews, who differed in religion, to fight among themselves. Over time, mutual annihilation prevailed among the Jews.

The Jews greatly hated Hyrcanus, and his entire family was hated. Hyrcanus had sons named Antigonus, Aristobulus, and Alexander. Hyrcanus loved Antigonus. But he hated Alexander. He made Alexander live far away on Mount Galilee. He prayed to God for Antigonus, whom he loved, to inherit his power. However, he had a dream that Alexander would reign after him, and sadness overwhelmed him. But he told no one about his dream. He waited patiently, saying, "Let God do what He wills." He ruled for forty-four years and then died. After him, his son Aristobulus took power.

Aristobulus is the sixth prince of the Hasmonean lineage. By name, he is the second of these princes to be called king. When Aristobulus reigned, he felt proud. Boasting that no one was above him, he placed a large golden crown on his head. However, he greatly despised the high priest's crown. He imprisoned his brother Alexander and also imprisoned his mother because she loved Alexander. He appointed his brother and first son, Antigonus, as military leader.

Aristobulus sent his brother Antigonus to fight the Gentiles who refused to submit to him. Antigonus subjugated many and returned. He also came to the country of Qojish. King Aristobulus was very ill and awaited him. When he heard of his illness, he went to the Temple instead of going to him. He offered thanks to the Most High and Glorious God, who had made him victorious. There, he prayed to God for the physical healing of his brother. As it happened to be the Feast of Tabernacles, the Jews gathered at the Temple. Antigonus had a golden belt around his waist.

When they saw him moving back and forth in the Temple, adorned with the garments of a prince, the Jews greatly admired his stature and beauty. An elder, one of the Seleucid groups, saw Antigonius and saw people admiring him. He said to his student, "It would have been better if I had died before seeing the destruction of this young man. Behold, it has been revealed to me that he will be killed in Citron." Citron was a region on the coast known to be a place of destruction. It was a harbor for ships and had a large reception hall.

The student replied, "How can this be? Citron is very far from Qedesh. How can Antigonius go there and be killed?" The elder teacher was righteous and gave this answer to his student: "Do not consider what I mean as impossible or false, my son. Because Antigonius came to the Temple from his campaign and did not meet King Aristobulus first, informers have turned them against each other. Your brother Antigonius wants to kill you. That is why he left you and went to the Temple. From there, he is going to draw people to himself. He and his followers are adorned with honors and are enjoying themselves in the Temple. They also said to him, "Because your father has heard of your illness, he is being guarded by weapons." Aristobulus also ordered his soldiers to guard the gates with weapons and kill him. Then he changed his mind again and ordered them to remove their weapons and bring them to him.

King Aristobulus's wife greatly hated Antigonius. She also wanted him killed. Therefore, she changed her husband King Aristobulus's message and sent a messenger to summon Antigonius. She had the messenger tell the king that Antigonius had received the honor he deserved and should show himself to the king. She also sent a message as if King Aristobulus was

summoning him, saying, "I am very pleased to hear of your victory, and I am eager to see you in the garments of victory and honor you have gathered. So come quickly to me."

The messenger went to Antigonus and told him what Aristobulus's wife had instructed. Antigonus, without any suspicion, gladly went to King Aristobulus. He was wearing all his golden ornaments, without removing a single one. Aristobulus had a hall built like the Citron hall, filled with weapons, and named it "Mahfed Citron." As we explained earlier, there was a place called "Mahfed Citron" at the seaport (far from the Temple).

Aristobulus had previously ordered that anyone who approached Mahfed Citron (the one built by Aristobulus) should be killed, because it was a storage place for weapons and a secret location.

Many did not know about Mahfed Citron because it was built secretly and nearby. As Antigonus appeared through this Citron hall, Aristobulus's loyal soldiers immediately arrived and cut him down with swords.

The prophecy that the elder teacher had foretold, that Antigonus would be killed in Mahfed Citron, came true. When King Aristobulus heard of his brother Antigonus's death, he realized that he had been killed by cunning and indirect envy. He cried out loudly and beat his chest with his hand. He was still recovering from his illness, so his body was greatly weakened. The sorrow of his brother's death was added to his illness.

He spat blood from his mouth. His servants tried to calm him, but the death of his brother weighed heavily on his heart and caused him additional severe pain. The blood continued to flow from his mouth. The people took the blood flowing from his mouth to a skilled person to show him and to tell him to find medicine for it. They put the blood in a container and gave it to the messenger.

As the messenger walked to pass by the place where Antigonus was killed, Antigonus's blood had not yet dried, and the messenger slipped. Aristobulus's blood escaped from the container he was holding and spilled. The king's officials shouted at the messenger. Aristobulus also knew and said, "Blessed are You who judge justly and bear witness to the blood of the wicked."

He was suffering from heart disease and was in the throes of death. He suffered for a short time. All the people cried for Antigonus in unison because he had been their victor against their enemies, and their sorrow intensified. He was also very good.

Aristobulus died immediately. After him, his brother Alexander reigned. Hyrcanus's dream was thus proven true.

Alexander is the sixth prince of the Hasmonean lineage. He is the third to be called king. As soon as Aristobulus died, his soldiers quickly released Alexander from prison. Alexander heard that the people of Akka had rebelled due to Aristobulus's death. Alexander went to Akka in triumph and besieged it.

The people of Akka sent a message to Ptolemy, the son of Queen Cleopatra of Egypt, asking him to rescue them from Alexander.

They told him that they would submit to him. Ptolemy had fled from his mother and was living in Cyprus. Ptolemy set out from

Cyprus with ten soldiers and sailed to help the man who was governing Akka. When Alexander heard of Ptolemy's arrival, he left his ship near Akka and returned.

When the people of Akka realized that Ptolemy, the son of the Queen of Egypt, had arrived, they again changed their minds and said, "We will not submit to you. Do not enter our country."

Ptolemy had been made to bring his army from Cyprus by sending their known governor to him. They had also promised to submit to him, but they lied to him. The chief of Akka had given

Ptolemy a lot of money. With this, Ptolemy, without accepting the opposition of the people of Akka, broke through and took control of Akka. Then he set out to march to the Temple. When Alexander learned of Ptolemy's march against him, he sent a message to Queen Cleopatra of Egypt, saying, "Your son, who abandoned you and fled to Cyprus, is in our vicinity. Let us unite and surround him. At this time, he will be defeated and fall into your hands."

When Ptolemy heard of Alexander's meeting with his mother Cleopatra by messenger, he entered Galilee and killed many people and captured many. He continued on his way to fight Alexander. He arranged his army beautifully in the Jordan. Alexander, hearing this, set out from the Temple with his army to fight him. He had brought six thousand soldiers. He displayed much arrogance and pride.

Alexander went to the Jordan and engaged Ptolemy in battle, and the fight intensified. Ptolemy defeated Alexander and killed many of his soldiers. This defeat occurred because Alexander had relied on his own strength instead of trusting in the Most High and Glorious God. Cleopatra, Ptolemy's mother, the Queen of Egypt, set out to find her son whom Alexander had sent word about, as he had abandoned her and fled to Cyprus.

When Ptolemy heard of the arrival of his mother, Cleopatra, the Queen of Egypt, he was afraid and returned to Cyprus. Cleopatra, for her part, returned to Egypt when she heard that Ptolemy had fled to Cyprus out of fear. In the second year, Alexander went to Gaza and plundered it. He killed most of its inhabitants, for the people of Gaza had helped Ptolemy. He also destroyed their idols and slaughtered their idol priests. Having completed all this, he returned to the Temple. The second part of the book ends here.

When Alexander, son of Hyrcanus, arrived at the Feast of Tabernacles, he entered the Temple. According to the custom of the priests, he ascended to the altar. On this day, the Jews had a tradition of holding palm branches and singing. They began to sing according to their law and tradition. Among those who sang in the Temple holding palm branches, one struck the king's face with the palm branch he held.

At this, the king's officials were angry and said, "How dare you, people of Mitzelah, do this? How did you try to strike the king? You have defied his honor and have not respected him as king." But the Jews replied, "We sang to honor the feast, not to defy the king. The act was done without malicious intent. We should not abandon the tradition our fathers have preserved for us."

Alexander and his officials, however, did not accept this explanation. They intensely hated the Mitzelah groups. Since Alexander and his officials did not accept their explanation, the Mitzelah groups began to utter disrespectful words against Alexander and his officials. Alexander ordered his officials to kill the Mitzelah groups. On that very day, six thousand Jews from the Mitzelah party were killed.

After the Feast of Tabernacles, Alexander built a wall separating the altar from the common people's area and enclosing the altar. He proclaimed that no one except priests and high officials should approach the altar. The hatred between the Mitzelah and Sadducee parties intensified. Alexander abandoned the Mitzelah groups and began to support and help the Sadducees.

The hatred and conflict between them lasted for about seven years. During this time, fifty thousand of the Mitzelah people were killed.

Alexander tried to end the ignited hatred and establish peace, but since much blood had been shed like a tribal conflict, it could not be calmed. As the resentment and hatred of the Mitzelah groups continued to fester, they went to the Roman governor, Matthias, son of Sylpapos, to ask for help.

They detailed the atrocities that Alexander, son of Hyrcanus, had committed against them. They also described the killings and persecution he had inflicted upon them. They did not reveal Alexander's death until the end.

They had Alexander, son of Hyrcanus, buried where the kings were buried with honor. They consulted with the entire Jewish community and crowned Alexandra. The Jewish members of the Mitzelah group began to help her in her administration, forgetting the atrocities her husband Alexander had committed against them. The reign of Alexander, son of Hyrcanus, was twenty-seven years. She bore two sons, named Hyrcanus and Aristobulus. After Alexandra solidified her rule, she gathered the leaders of the Mitzelah group among the Jews. She restored their authority and greatly honored them. She released all who were imprisoned from their group. She also returned every Jew who had been exiled and scattered from the country by Hyrcanus and Alexander to their homeland. She abandoned the Sadducees and followed and supported the Mitzelah.

When her sons Hyrcanus and Aristobulus grew up, she appointed Hyrcanus as high priest, for he was humble, compassionate, and patient. She appointed Aristobulus as military leader, for he was strong and handsome. The Mitzelah groups accepted his appointment. The countries that Alexander had ruled submitted completely to her. They paid tribute to her every year.

Her reign was strong. All commands were accepted. The Mitzelah leaders came to her and said, "You know that the Sadducees, pushing Alexander, killed and crucified eight thousand of our people at once. Therefore, allow us to avenge the blood of our killed people by killing men from the Sadducees." Alexandra told them, "Do what you wish."

The Jews, who were of the Mitzelah group, went to the leader of the Sadducees and killed him. They then went on to kill many of the Sadducees. Realizing that the times had turned against them, the Sadducees gathered around Alexandra. Aristobulus was also with them at this time. They said to Alexandra, "We helped Alexander conquer countries and subjugate others. He was able to become such a great king because of our help. Now we are in great trouble. How can you ignore all this? You have incited our enemies against us, and they have laid hands on us and done whatever they wished to us. They are Alexander's enemies, but we were his friends. If you had remembered all this, you would have done us a great favor. With our support, you subjugated all the Gentiles. The Gentiles will rejoice when they hear of our humiliation. They might even rise up to seize your kingdom, and they might rise up to fight you. You do not know what will come upon you later. But we will not betray you and will not deviate from your command. However, we will not allow the Mitzelah groups to slaughter us like sheep. We have the strength to defend ourselves. If you can, pacify them for us. Otherwise, allow us to leave the country and go into exile. We will not stand by and watch the annihilation of our people." They pleaded tearfully before her. Alexandra also wept with them.

Her son Aristobulus also supported the Sadducees and elaborated on their support. For this reason, Alexandra was

confused. Therefore, her female advisors counseled her to make the Sadducees leave the country.

Alexandra allowed the Sadducees to leave the country of the Temple. She told them, "You cannot live with the Mitzelah. You have previously committed atrocities against them, and there is irreconcilable hatred between you and them."

Alexandra believed that peace would be established. So the Sadducees left the country. When the Sadducees left, the chief commanders of the army also left with them. This decision was put into practice. It was Alexandra's greatest weakness. All those who had peacefully obeyed her began to desert and go wherever the Sadducees were. All those who had given great support since her husband's death began to betray her. This became the cause of the internecine war between her sons, Hyrcanus and Aristobulus.

Alexandra ruled for nine years and then died. She was 73 years old. Alexandra was beautiful and devout. She was protected from obstacles and evil. She committed no other error than the one she made against the Sadducees. After Alexandra, her son Aristobulus reigned.

Aristobulus is the eighth of the Hasmonean princes. He is the fourth to be called king. When Aristobulus saw his mother Alexandra's severe illness, he went out at night and went to the Temple. He went to where the Sadducees were and told them about his mother's severe illness. He asked them to align with him and help him gain the kingship with their assistance.

They gladly accepted his request. The news reached his mother Alexandra. Alexandra ordered Aristobulus's wife and children to be imprisoned. Aristobulus's movement gained strength with the support of the Sadducees. He called them back to help him. They

gathered around him, rising from the mountains of Lebanon and Galilee. Others from other regions also came to him. His army grew greatly. He waged war. He engaged his brother Hyrcanus in battle.

The Mitzelah groups heard this and were greatly afraid. In the meantime, Alexandra died. Aristobulus went to the Jordan and prepared for war. Hyrcanus, with his supporters, the Mitzelah groups, went and engaged them in battle there. Hyrcanus was defeated and fled to the Temple. Aristobulus pursued him and besieged the Temple. He ordered his soldiers to demolish the city wall.

At this time, the priests of the Temple and the elders of the Jews, who were in great distress, came out and fell at Aristobulus's feet.

They pleaded with him to reconcile with his brother. Aristobulus listened to their plea and reconciled with his brother Hyrcanus. Aristobulus became king, and Hyrcanus became high priest. The people offered a supplication, and there was peace for a short time. A short time later, however, a man named Antipatros set Hyrcanus and Aristobulus against each other, and the quarrel reignited.

Antipatros was a Jew, one of the Jews who returned from Babylon with the priest Azra. Antipatros's family had a tendency to belittle people. By nature, he was evil and entangled in wicked cunning.

He was wealthy in land and money. He was also wealthy in livestock. Alexander, son of Hyrcanus, had appointed this man to ignite Rome for him.

The country where Antipatros was appointed was called Debre Shurach, which had separated from Rome and become a Jewish territory. Antipatros had governed Debre Shurach for many years. He married an Edomite woman and had four sons with her. Their

names were Pheroras, Herod, Phasahel, and Joseph. The fifth child was a daughter named "Salome."

The Jews say he was of Edomite descent and had no Israelite lineage. One of the priests from the Hasmonean tribes had accepted Antipatros as a slave. When Alexander, son of Hyrcanus, died and Alexandra reigned, Antipatros was removed from office. He settled in the country of Qedesh without office. He seemed to be a close friend to both brothers, Aristobulus and Hyrcanus, individually. However, when he set them against each other, he worked with cunning. He also made efforts to remove Aristobulus.

He told Hyrcanus, who held the office of High Priest, "Your brother Aristobulus is ready to kill you. He does not believe that your kingdom will be firm as long as you are alive. The people do not know that he has rebelled against you and become king, and you are superior to him in knowledge. He is only waiting for the opportune moment. Therefore, be careful for your life. If he finds an opportune moment, he will not hesitate to kill you." Hyrcanus did not accept Antipatros's advice. But Antipatros repeatedly gave him this false counsel. Finally, when Hyrcanus refused to accept it, Antipatros gave a lot of money to other people to repeatedly tell this deceptive message to Hyrcanus, the High Priest, making Hyrcanus doubt and fear.

Antipatros told Hyrcanus, "Instead of waiting where you are until your brother Aristobulus kills you, go to the Western king and seek refuge and live in peace." After Antipatros said this, he went to the Western king and told him that Hyrcanus, the High Priest, could not live in peace with his brother Aristobulus, who held the kingship, so he would come to him for refuge, and to receive him. The king was happy to receive and shelter Hyrcanus.

After accomplishing this, he returned to the Temple. The Western king was named Aretas. Aretas told Hyrcanus that he was willing to shelter him. Antipatros secretly took Hyrcanus to the Western king Aretas at night. They stayed there for a short time. Then Antipatros urged Aretas to fight Aristobulus. Hyrcanus also expressed that he would help him.

Aretas, however, disagreed with this. Before this, Alexander, son of Hyrcanus, had fought Aretas three times and killed many of his soldiers, so he could not accept this. Antipatros, in his wicked treachery, told Aretas, "Aristobulus is hated by the Jews. Their desire is for Hyrcanus to reign over them." At this, the Western king Aretas thought it was true and said, "Yes."

Aretas made Hyrcanus promise to return the property that Alexander, son of Hyrcanus, had taken captive when he became king. Immediately, Aretas, with Hyrcanus, set out with a large army to fight Aristobulus. Most of Aristobulus's soldiers betrayed him and joined Hyrcanus. The army remaining with Aristobulus became small.

When Aristobulus saw that he was left alone with a small army, he fled at night and sought refuge in the Temple. Immediately, Hyrcanus and the Western king Aretas entered the country of the Jews. Since many of the Jewish residents supported Aristobulus, a war was fought for two full days. In this war, many fled to Egypt. As this was happening, the Feast of Unleavened Bread arrived.

The Jewish priests said to Hyrcanus's soldiers, "The Feast of Unleavened Bread has arrived. We have no animals to slaughter for sacrifice. This feast is a feast made by God. Fear God and do not break His law. And do not prevent us from doing this." Aretas and Hyrcanus did not accept this Jewish saying and said, "Give us a lot of money, and we will return." Aristobulus gathered

the money and gave it to them. They then stopped besieging the Temple. However, because the Jews of the Temple had displeased God, He punished them with famine, and many died of hunger.

In that era, there was an old man named Onias. He used to pray to God with fasting and prayer. His holiness was known to all. The Jews who sided with Hyrcanus found him and took him to where their soldiers were. They said to him, "You are known to be a servant of God. Therefore, curse Aristobulus for us and curse those who follow him. Ask God to give us victory over them."

The old man, however, replied to them, "I should not curse Aristobulus and his followers, nor you. You are all God's people, and those who sided with Aristobulus are also God's priests. However, I should pray for both them and you." But they strongly urged him to curse them. He, however, remained stubborn and did not agree. Finally, they wanted to kill him.

At this, he raised his hands to heaven and said, "O God, You alone are great! You created all creatures, and You rule over Your creatures. You turn their hearts wherever You will. You establish peace among Your people. I pray that You will turn the hearts of Your priests and Your commands to good things, and that You will not allow each of them to perish. Help them to do good, and remove evil and hatred from among them. Make them desire to know You and draw near to You."

This old man prayed all this, but because he refused to accept the request of Hyrcanus and his like to curse Aristobulus and his follower priests, they killed him. God, seeing their cruelty, caused them to be infected with malaria where they were, and many perished from the disease.

Aristobulus has wronged us, and according to our law, Hyrcanus, being the elder, should reign. He is good, but Aristobulus is wicked. He has killed many people, plundered their money, and set them against each other. He also set us against each other, by bringing forward an old man as a witness."

Aristobulus said, "Indeed, my brother is older than I, but when the Gentiles, who were our subjects, rebelled against us, I realized that my brother could not lead the government. I feared that our enemies would destroy us. Based on this, I was compelled to take over the government and I led it with discipline, and our enemies were subdued. The attack that was about to be launched against us by the enemy was averted, and we tried to live in peace. Our father wished for this before he died. My father saw the situation and said that I should be king. He had also entrusted this to my mother, Alexandra," and he presented many witnesses from among the Jews.

The Jewish youths Aristobulus presented as witnesses were not only young but also adorned with beautiful clothes and various ornaments. The Roman king, Pompey, was greatly astonished when he saw the beauty of these youths and their attire, especially the gold and diamond ornaments, considering them superior. He decided in his mind that the Jews should be under his rule. Therefore, he said to them, "I cannot give a judgment unless I go to the Temple and examine the situation. I must go to the Temple to give a full judgment."

Pompey left Damascus and went to the Temple. At this time, Antipatros went to the countries that Aristobulus had fought and conquered and advised Pompey to receive them well. He urged them to detail and tell Pompey about the injustices Aristobulus had committed against them. He also strongly encouraged them

to demand their plundered property that was taken during
Aristobulus's invasion.

Pompey ordered Aristobulus in writing to have the subjugated
peoples welcome him. Aristobulus did as he was ordered. The
people came in line and protested against him. Aristobulus,
suspecting Pompey, quickly fled and sought refuge in the Temple.
When Pompey marched towards him, he stayed in Jericho. Then
he approached the Temple and stayed there.

The reason Pompey stayed in Jericho was that Jericho was
abundant in fragrant lemon trees, fig trees, and other fragrant
plants. The fragrant perfumes that grew there could not be found
elsewhere. Many kings of the world had taken these plants from
Jericho and tried to plant them in their countries, but they could
not grow them. Only in Egypt could this perfume plant grow. Figs,
along with other fragrant plants, were found in Jericho in
abundance until the Temple was destroyed again. But when the
Temple was destroyed again, they dried up and completely
disappeared. The perfume that grew in Egypt also lasted until
then and then disappeared.

Pompey went from Jericho to the Temple. Aristobulus came out
and received him with trembling and fear. He forgave him and
said, "My brother has rebelled against my kingdom, so make him
obey me and protect my honor. Otherwise, my enemies will mock
me. Save me from humiliation, and I will give you whatever you
desire."

Pompey replied, "Come on, hand over all the property
accumulated in the Temple. Give me all the gold, silver, and
money. I will hand over the synagogue in Cyprus, known as the
'Al-Shamatri,' which belongs to the Roman gods. And I will fulfill
what you have asked."

Aristobulus replied, "Everything in the Temple is yours. Just send someone to bring it to you." Pompey sent one of his commanders to bring the Temple's artifacts. When he tried to leave with all the Temple's artifacts, the priests and the people stopped him. After a short time, a war broke out with Aristobulus's army. Hyrcanus's army, finding an opportune moment, killed many people. Pompey, realizing this, stood at the city gate and followed his army. The Jewish people opened the gate for him, and he entered and seized the king's tent. He then went to enter the Temple, but he could not. The priests closed the Temple gate and told him they would not let him in. Pompey sent his soldiers to attack them. This happened in the month called Tammuz. The war continued until the fasting season began. When the fast of the seventeenth of Tammuz arrived, the priests brought offerings to the Temple. They were very exhausted from the war.

At this time, Pompey ordered that barbed iron stakes be planted around every enclosure. With this, the Roman soldiers breached the enclosure and entered the Temple, slaughtering many people. However, the priests did not stop their Temple service despite all the hardship they faced. Without being disheartened, they offered incense and continued their sacrifice. They encouraged each other, saying, "We will steadfastly fulfill the commands of the Law, even if we die, we will continue to perform God's mission." When their enemies came to kill them, they continued to perform their mission without looking away. When one of them was killed, another priest who was with him would perform the spiritual task. Many priests were killed by Roman soldiers without showing any sign of fleeing. Their blood was mixed with the blood of the sacrifices, and they were killed while fulfilling God's command.

The Roman king Pompey was greatly astonished when he saw the architecture of the Temple. He was filled with awe. He was greatly amazed by the placement and construction of the sacred vessels. However, he did not take a single one of them. He called the surviving priests and ordered them to cleanse the Temple, which was drenched in the blood of the slaughtered priests, to bury the bodies of the slain priests, and to continue their usual spiritual rituals without interruption.

After giving this command, Pompey left the Temple and returned to his country, and Hyrcanus reigned over the Jews. Aristobulus, however, remained imprisoned as Pompey had captured him. Some of his many followers were killed. Hyrcanus abolished the subjection of the Jews to the Gentiles. He also reclaimed the territories that had been taken by the Gentiles. The Jews, however, decided to pay annual tribute to the Romans.

Before Pompey left the Temple, he made his chief minister Antipatros and Hyrcanus swear an oath not to betray him. He took Aristobulus and two of his sons to Rome to be imprisoned. His third son, Alexander, however, escaped by fleeing and was not captured by Pompey, so he remained hidden and was not taken away. When Pompey left the Temple, he left his representative, named Scaurus, behind.

Hyrcanus, Antipatros, and Scaurus began to rule the Jews in agreement. To please Pompey, they went to the west to carry out his commands. They decided to continue to agree with the Roman government. When Alexander, the son of Aristobulus, heard that Hyrcanus, along with Scaurus, had gone to the west to continue to agree with the Roman government, he ran from his hiding place and entered the Temple. The Jews welcomed him

with joy and immediately crowned him king. He immediately rebuilt the Temple enclosure that Pompey had destroyed. Many Jews quickly gathered around him. When Hyrcanus returned from the western region where he had gone with Antipatros and Scaurus, Alexander waited for him, prepared for battle, and killed many of his followers and drove them away. Vespasian, one of the high-ranking Roman officials, left Rome to visit Armenia. While he was there, he heard that Alexander, the son of Aristobulus, had taken control of the Temple, so he went to the country of Qedesh to fight him. Hyrcanus, Antipatros, and Scaurus also followed him to fight Alexander in the Temple/Qedesh. Alexander engaged them in battle on the battlefield and captured Hyrcanus, Antipatros, and Scaurus. However, Vespasian gradually gained strength and besieged Qedesh. At this time, Alexander's father, Aristobulus, had escaped from a Roman prison.

Alexander approached Vespasian peacefully and persuaded him to establish peace and reconciliation. Immediately, however, Aristobulus arrived in the country of the Jews with a man named Antipater. He defeated many of them, and his followers killed many. Aristobulus was captured again and taken to Rome. He remained imprisoned until the establishment of the rule of the Caesars.

It has been stated previously that Rome had been ruled by elected elders for a long time. Finally, however, a tyrannical Caesar reigned. He killed the elected elders and their followers, removed them from power, and reigned himself. This first Caesar of Rome, Pompey, knew that Aristobulus was imprisoned, so he looked at him favorably and gave him a great position of authority.

He made two great officials his subordinates and allowed him to rule Armenia and the country of the Jews. He also made a hundred and fifty soldiers part of his army. He also ordered him to make the countries of Armenia and the Jews obey only him (Caesar) and not Pompey's commands. He also helped him to remove Pompey, who was stationed in Damascus. He ordered Aristobulus to make Armenia and the Jewish people cooperate with him.

The chief minister, Antipatros, seeing the arrival of Aristobulus with great power, sought a way to communicate with him. He called the great men of the Temple and ordered them to receive Aristobulus with great honor from a distance. He advised them to approach Aristobulus, saying, "We are people of the Temple, who are of your kin." He also prepared a cunning man and sent him to Armenia.

Aristobulus gave a great welcome to the messengers who came from Qedesh. These cunning men, pretending to be friends, prepared situations to poison Aristobulus. Finally, they killed him by adding poison to his food.

He was buried in Armenia. Aristobulus remained in power and in prison for three and a half years. He was a very strong and intelligent man. Before Caesar came to power, the children born to the elected elder (in Rome) were with Aristobulus, so their mother, fearing for them, had sent them to the Temple.

He heard that the people of Egypt of the Hasmonean dynasty had said they would not obey their king and would not pay tribute to the Roman government. The king of Egypt was named Ptolemy.

The chief minister, Antipatros, along with the Hasmoneans, marched to Rome and approached them. He killed many soldiers. He also restored Ptolemy to his kingdom.

The unrest in Egypt ended. The Hasmonean dynasty returned to its country. The Hasmonean dynasty was a Roman authority. Hyrcanus became very strong because his brother had died. He placed Antipatros in a position of honor. After a short time, he returned to Rome.

When Vespasian returned to Rome, the Persians rebelled against Roman rule. Crassus set out to fight and subdue them. Crassus marched to Persia with a large army. Instead of going to Persia, he went to the Temple and entered the house of God. He asked the priests to hand over all the property in the Temple.

At that time, there was a kind priest among the priests named Eleazar. This priest said to Crassus, "Many kings have given gifts to the Temple, but they have not taken anything. How did you come to take this? Pompey, Vespasian, and others did not take anything." Crassus, however, replied, "There will be nothing left. I will take everything." This kind priest Eleazar said to him, "One talent is two minas. Therefore, I will give you three hundred minas, but do not take the property of the Temple."

Crassus agreed to this. There was a gold idol in the Temple that had been given as a gift by other kings. Its craftsmanship was pleasing, made by a very skillful person, and it filled one part of the treasury. It weighed three hundred minas. No one among the priests knew of the existence of this idol except Eleazar. So he gave this gold idol to Crassus.

However, after Crassus took possession of this gold idol, he broke his covenant and plundered all the remaining property of the Temple with his authority. He swept away all the Temple's property that had been accumulated since the Temple was rebuilt, leaving nothing behind. He took everything the Jews had accumulated whenever they invaded other countries' kingdoms.

One 'bedel' is equal to ten thousand silver coins. The property taken from the Temple was equivalent to two thousand 'bedels.'

In addition to the property the Jews had collected as plunder, there was also property given by individuals in sacrifice. Kings had also voluntarily surrendered much property. The Gentiles whom the Jews subjected also offered gifts to the Temple in the form of tribute. Crassus plundered this Temple property and continued his journey to Persia. He engaged them in battle, but they defeated him and were not subdued. Many soldiers perished in the war with the Persians. All his possessions, including the property he had plundered from the Temple, were captured by them. In their pursuit of him, they took control of Armenia.

Subsequently, they took many other Roman territories.

The Roman authorities, fearing the situation, sent a large army led by a military commander named Coslofe to fight the Persians. He reclaimed all the Roman territories occupied by the Persians, including Armenia.

Coslofe then went to the country of Qedesh. He found Hyrcanus and Antipatros fighting with their fellow Jews. He reconciled them and made them live in agreement. While he was there, he went to Persia and made the Persians pay tribute under Roman rule. He also went to the East.

Joachim, the father of the Holy Virgin Mary, was born at this time.

Joachim's father was Levi, the son of Melchi. Levi begat Mattathias and Qesra. Mattathias begat Eli. Qesra is the father of Mattathias. Mattathias is also the father of Joachim. Joachim is the father of our Lady Mary. The birth of Joseph is as follows: When Eli, the son of Mattathias, died, Jacob's father begat a son for his brother from Eli's wife, to raise up seed for his brother.

They named him Joseph. Joseph is the son of Jacob by flesh, but according to the Mosaic Law, he is the son of Eli.

This section describes how Caesar was able to rule Rome and his persecution of all rabbis from all Roman territories. Three hundred and twenty Roman officials were under the elected Roman elder.

The elder chosen by the people died during childbirth. Because her child died in her womb, the child was moving in her womb while she was dead. So clever people cut open the dead woman's womb and took out the child, who came out healthy.

The child grew up and was given the name "Blobaus." This name was given because he was taken in the fifth month of the year. To recall the story of his taking, they called him Caesar again.

Caesar in their language means "one who cuts" or "one who tears apart." As Caesar grew up, he became very strong and firm. At that time, in the Western and Eastern territories, which were Roman provinces, there was a breakdown of rule. Countries began to refuse to obey Rome.

The Romans sent Caesar to the West as a military commander. He achieved victory wherever he went and made them pay tribute to the Roman government. He returned to Rome with great honor as a hero. When he returned, his heart hardened, and he desired kingship. He asked the people of Rome to call him king. At this time, those three hundred and twenty subordinate officials of the Roman elder, who was chosen by the people, had sworn an oath to the elder, their fathers, that there would be no king. The reason for this was the crime committed by a king named "Berekios."

They made a law and decided that it should remain in their time and after them. "We have been ruled by elders chosen by the people until our time, and we are still being ruled. And heroes who subjugated many rebellious countries and returned never called

themselves king. Pompey marched to Eastern countries, conquering two kings and bringing them under Roman rule, and he is great and honorable for this. But he never asked to be made king. It was Pompey who subjugated the very strong Jews under Roman rule."

Therefore, we do not hate Caesar for saying, "Make me king." But we replied, "We have inherited a law from our fathers, which states that we shall not have a king in our country except for a leader chosen by the people."

Caesar, however, did not accept their words at all. Immediately, because he gained many followers, he killed the leader chosen by the people and the three hundred and twenty counselors. He declared himself king by his own might and tyranny. The Roman governor who administered Egypt, named "Lophemius," began to refuse to pay tribute to the Roman government. So Caesar went to Egypt, fought him, and killed him. He brought Egypt under his rule and controlled all Roman territories. He also marched to Armenia. Before he destroyed Armenia, the Armenian king knelt before him and said, "I am under your rule." The name of the Armenian king was "Mithradates."

Caesar ordered Mithradates to go to Egypt and summon the former Roman official Pompey's subordinate officials who were in Egypt. Mithradates continued his journey to Egypt as ordered by Caesar. He also reached a country called "Assyria." Pompey was the chief of the great Roman officials killed by Caesar.

Hyrcanus, the Jewish king, had risen to power again with Pompey's support. Therefore, Caesar's arrival in Armenia startled Hyrcanus.

Hyrcanus had previously chosen to make peace with Caesar. He sent Antipatros with a large army to meet Caesar in Armenia.

Antipatros and Mithradates met on the way in Ascalon. Antipatros went with Mithradates to Caesar in Egypt. If Mithradates tried to fight the Egyptians alone, the Egyptians would defeat him, but Antipatros helped him and they defeated them. However, even though the Egyptians submitted, Antipatros was severely wounded in the battle. Mithradates greatly honored Antipatros and reported his good deed to Caesar. Caesar was very pleased when he read what Mithradates had said about Antipatros. He praised Antipatros and summoned him. They returned with Mithradates and met Caesar in Damascus.

Caesar gave him great hope. Immediately, however, Antipatros's nephew, the son of Aristobulus, whose name was Lysias, detailed to Caesar the injustice Antipatros had committed against Aristobulus. He said that Hyrcanus and Antipatros had committed injustice against Aristobulus.

Caesar greatly hated Pompey. At this time, Aristobulus's son Lysias said to Caesar, "When my father Aristobulus rose to fight Pompey, Hyrcanus and Antipatros supported Pompey and killed him." At this time, Antipatros replied, "Because Pompey subjugated the Jews, I loved him for the honor of the Roman government. Therefore, for Caesar's sake, let only the favor I did in Egypt be seen." He then revealed his wounded head, hands, and other body parts to Caesar, saying, "I did not go anywhere for Pompey, but for you, Caesar, I gave my life on the battlefield and was severely wounded."

Caesar was greatly astonished when he heard Antipatros's speech. He praised him, saying, "It is truly revealed that you are a peaceful man among the Jews, praised by all who love you. The wounds visible on your body are witnesses to your steadfastness. They reveal and testify to your honor and love for me, and your

steadfastness. Behold, I will make you superior to all my beloved faithful ones.

"I will go to the East for a campaign, and you will march with me as a military commander. I am going to subjugate the Persians. When I return, you will return with me. After that, you will return to your country with the authority that you desire."

Caesar went to Persia to fight and subjugate it. Antipatros also went with him. Antipatros's bravery became known at this time, and Antipatros was praised by Caesar as "humble, patient, of good character, and more skillful than Caesar." He increased his honor and victory. Caesar sent Antipatros back to his country, Judea, from Persia. Caesar returned to Rome, and Antipatros returned to Judea.

Antipatros, with Caesar, helped Hyrcanus to continue as king of the Jews in peace. He also clearly revealed that he was the king of the Temple. Hyrcanus was praised for his administration. He was also spoken of among the Jews as being "merciful, not cruel, and loving peace and quiet." He was able to achieve all this through Antipatros's effort and diligence.

Herod is the son of Antipatros. Hyrcanus, seeing Antipatros's humility and counsel, appointed him and his sons in the assembly.

He appointed Antipatros's son Phasaël as the supervisor of the Temple, and his second son, Herod, he gave the rank of governor.

The place where Herod was appointed governor was Galilee.

Herod was governor of Galilee when he was fifteen years old. Since Antipatros's sons held political supremacy, they gained the people's sentiment. Hyrcanus's authority, however, floated like a puppet. At that time, there was a revolutionary man known as Hezekiah. He gathered government officials to him. He advised

the government officials he gathered to go to Armenia and plunder, to kill people, and to share the plunder.

A letter was written to Herod, saying, "Make Hezekiah desist from his evil deeds. You know what Caesar's will is. You know the destruction Hezekiah and his followers have committed in Armenia. I ask you to free me from this revolutionary man. King Caesar also does not accept this revolutionary's actions. Therefore, if you put an end to Hezekiah's actions, Caesar will be pleased. And we will not forget your favor."

Herod read the letter and left Galilee and continued his journey to Armenia. When Herod was plundering Armenia and returning, he met Hezekiah on the way. He surrounded and captured him and killed Hezekiah. He also killed those who were following Hezekiah and plundering. He wrote this (explained it in writing) to Sphanos, Caesar's subordinate officer. Sphanos, pleased with Herod's actions, sent him a gift of money. Other Roman officials also sent him gifts. Sphanos praised Herod.

Herod's reputation continued to grow and spread. His followers multiplied. When the Jews heard of Hezekiah's killing, they were greatly disturbed. They gathered before King Hyrcanus and said, "How long will you tolerate Antipatros? He and his sons have taken everything into their hands and taken control. Will you just watch while your authority has been taken away, even though you carry the title? Antipatros is known to have gained favor with the Roman kings with your money and by befriending them. His son Phasael, as the supervisor of the Temple, does whatever he wants without your command. His son Herod also killed Hezekiah, who had been subjugating the Gentiles in our name, to please the Caesars, especially to please the people of Armenia. He wants to receive money and other gifts from the Armenians. You should

bring Herod to justice for murder." After rebuking him, they brought the mothers of the men who were killed with Hezekiah before him. They also brought the wives of the killed men. Wherever Hyrcanus moved, the Jews greatly distressed him with their shouts because of his negligence. They cried about the injustice Herod had committed and pleaded with him to free them from his tyranny.

Hyrcanus, not knowing what to do, was greatly troubled and wrote a letter to Herod, asking him to come to the country of Qedesh. Herod came to the court where the Jewish rabbis judged, bringing a large army with him. At this time, Herod came with a neatly trimmed beard, wearing very beautiful clothes, and girded with a sword. The soldiers who followed him carried weapons ready for battle.

Hyrcanus, for his part, came to the court with his soldiers. When the rabbis saw Herod's demeanor, they refrained from judging him at all. They were greatly afraid of him. All those who had been speaking much against him to Hyrcanus retreated. They did not dare to utter a single word. All who had previously spoken much against Herod were silenced. The elders (Jewish elders), however, began to give a just judgment. Nevertheless, Hyrcanus, realizing that the handling of the matter was not good, asked the elders to postpone the matter. He said the matter should be detailed and examined the next day.

A student of one of the rabbis, named Samai, was also present and was disturbed. "Everyone who comes to the court of judgment and against whom a charge of murder is brought used to come dressed in black, without grooming his hair, in fear and trembling. But this young Herod came in a different manner. He did not wear clothes that express remorse when an offender is

accused of a crime. Instead, he and his army came prepared only for war. The reason he did this was that he despised and deliberately provoked the court and the judges."

"...He came ready to immediately avenge himself on anyone who dared to judge him. You judges, I am astonished that you did not punish or silence him when he appeared before you dressed unlawfully. This Herod will eventually become your king; at that time, he will judge as he pleases, shed your blood, and plunder your property. Because of his fear, Hyrcanus allowed the judgment to be postponed. However, he also said, 'Hyrcanus will inevitably be killed by Herod, and his kingdom will be taken by Herod.' Hyrcanus heard Samai's words and returned home. The elders, rabbis, and others gathered in the court followed Hyrcanus. That very night, Herod left Galilee and went to Armenia, where he met Pompey, Caesar's representative. Pompey received Herod with great honor and gave him authority to rule all of Judea, in addition to his governorship of Galilee." The message Hyrcanus wrote to Caesar was titled "The Book of Hyrcanus's Covenant." Hyrcanus sent this covenant book to Caesar through his own messengers. Hyrcanus's messengers traveled to Rome with this book of covenant. He sent the message to Caesar so that Caesar would renew the covenant. When Hyrcanus's messengers arrived in Rome, Caesar received them with joy and gave them a good reception. For a time, he allowed them to be like members of the royal household and fulfilled all their desires. He wrote the following in response to Hyrcanus's covenant message: "Greetings to you, representatives of the Roman government living in Judea, from Caesar the Emperor. The book of Hyrcanus, son of Alexander, has reached me. The arrival of this message has pleased me.

"His and his people's love for me shows their respect for all the people of Rome. Hyrcanus loves Antipatros, who is of the Pharisee faction of the Jews, very much. Antipatros, along with my friend Mithradates, is a good and loyal subject of mine, who defeated the Egyptians and brought them under my rule. It was Antipatros who saved my friend Mithradates from the severe war he faced in Egypt.

"When I traveled to subjugate Persia, he accompanied me and ensured that all countries, without exception, submitted to me. Now, all the customs duties collected from the ports, from Gaza to Sidon, shall be delivered to the House of God. An amount of two hundred thousand coins collected from them, along with wheat, shall be given to the Temple annually.

"All the land of Laodicea and its environs, which is under the hand of the Jewish king, including all the land up to the Euphrates River, and all the land where the children of the Hasmonean dynasty live, when he became the Jewish king, his fathers had brought all the mentioned land under their power by their strength.

"Pompey toiled greatly to take from Aristobulus and Hyrcanus, and he also made them come to me by word. From today, however, I have given all of that to King Hyrcanus. What I have given to Hyrcanus today, I have decided that it shall remain valid forever for all his followers. All who reign in Rome shall honor this law. God will judge anyone who violates, abolishes, or dares to transgress this law. Let a curse be upon him and upon his country as well. Let everyone who reads this 'Book of the Covenant' be written on iron tablets. Let it be written in Greek and Roman languages and be hung on walls and in every public square for all to read. Let it also be hung in the place of idol worship called 'Al-Moshar,' where the idol called 'Jobes' is worshipped. If this is

done, it will be known that this is a law given to Hyrcanus and the Jews."

Caesar relaxed, believing that everyone had submitted to him.

Suddenly, two unexpected individuals, Scaurus and Absalom, killed him. These were high-ranking government officials and also friends of Pompey. Scaurus immediately gathered a large army and became powerful. However, because he had killed Caesar with his accomplice, he feared for his life and did not want to stay in Rome. Instead, he crossed the sea and conquered Asia.

Scaurus went to the land of Judea and forced the Jews to give him 70 talents of gold. At this time, Antipatros, with his son who was the Temple supervisor and Herod, began to collect this extremely large sum of money from all over Judea. Scaurus received the collected money from Antipatros and went to Macedonia to settle. The Jewish leaders secretly sent someone to kill Antipatros, but they did not succeed. Gradually, he bribed the wine steward with money and gave him poison to kill Antipatros. The wine steward added the poison to Antipatros's drink, and he died immediately. Antipatros had poisoned and killed Hyrcanus's brother, Aristobulus, and he himself received his due by being poisoned. In this way, God shows His power.

Hyrcanus was completely unaware of Antipatros's death by poisoning. The person who poisoned Antipatros was named Milikias. When Herod heard of his father's death by poisoning, he went from Galilee to the Temple to avenge his father's blood. However, his brother, Phasael, who was appointed to supervise the Temple, prevented him from entering, fearing an uprising. Meanwhile, a man named Lysias told Phasael about what he had done to his father, Antipatros. Phasael advised him to kill Milikias. However, he did not dare to kill him.

It was heard that Lysias, Caesar's nephew, was involved in Antipatros's killing. Agrippa and Antigonus, leading large armies, marched into Macedonia and suddenly killed Crassus, who had made Macedonia his seat, along with Absalom, the first Caesar.

Agrippa, the first Caesar's brother, became the Roman king, called Augustus. He rose to a very high position of power. He was again called Caesar the Second, to remember his father's brother, Caesar. Subsequent Roman kings continued to use both Caesar and Augustus as their titles.

In the reign of Augustus, the second Caesar, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ was born, praise be to Him. When Hyrcanus, the king of the Jews, heard that Augustus had become king after his death, he sent messengers to him with many gifts. Among the gifts was a golden crown adorned with precious stones. He also wrote a letter asking him to renew the covenant agreement he had with the previous Caesar. He also urged him to grant freedom to the Jews who were scattered and captured in various countries so that they could return to their homeland.

Augustus received the gift and was pleased. He received the messengers with honor and announced that he would give a favorable response to all that Hyrcanus had requested. He wrote a reply letter that said: "From Emperor Augustus and Antipas, the commander of the army, to Hyrcanus, king of the Jews, greetings to you. We are pleased to read your message. We have fully agreed to fulfill all that you have detailed in your letter. From India to the ocean and to the West, in all our territories, we have agreed to renew your covenant.

"We were unable to avenge the former Caesar's audacity and murder. But God gave us power, and we defeated him and killed him. We made his rebellious followers hide. We also liberated the

land of Asia. Many were subjected to suffering due to his cruelty. Hyrcanus, King of the Jews, you and the priests in the house of God, lift up your gifts. Pray to God that Emperor Augustus may live long. Antipas, the commander of the army, and I have given orders that the Jews in all countries be released freely without any preconditions."

Augustus kept his word and ordered everyone who held Jewish territory or had captured Jews to return them without exception.

He also ordered them to honor the covenant that the previous Caesar had made with the Jews even more. Antipas, the commander of the army in Armenia, was ordered to enforce this.

A queen of Egypt named Cleopatra went to Antipas, the commander of the army, and married him. Cleopatra, through her sorcery, prevented her officials from leaving her command. At this time, officials went to Antipas, the commander of the army. Antipas loved Herod and his brother. Therefore, Antipas killed the Jewish elders who accused Herod. He also made Herod and his brother high priests and sent them forth with great honor. Antipas went to subjugate the Persians while he was there.

After Augustus and Antipas returned from subjugating Persia, Antigonus went to the king of Persia and said to him, "I will take one thousand talents of gold and seven hundred camels from the Jews and give them to you. So, take the kingship from my brother Hyrcanus and give it to me." He also asked him to kill Phasael and Herod. It is known that Phasael is Herod's brother. The king of Persia agreed to Antigonus's request. Immediately, the king of Persia set out with a large army and invaded Armenia, which was a Roman province. Then he killed the Romans who were there. His representatives took control of Armenia, and from there, he moved to march on the Temple while he was there.

The purpose of the journey was to kill Hyrcanus, the king of the Jews, at Antigonus's instigation. The purpose of the journey was not only to kill Hyrcanus but also his brothers Herod and Phasaël.

After that, the king of Persia sent a peaceful-looking envoy, without war, to Hyrcanus (to the Temple) to hand over the entire kingdom to Antigonus. Their envoys appeared peaceful. When Antigonus said, "I want to enter the Temple to worship," the Jews suspected him and prevented him from entering. But he swore to them that he had not come for evil purposes. Herod and his brother watched the situation from a distance with suspicion. Antigonus and the Persian king's follower entered the Temple and began to kill people. Herod and his brother quickly fled to Galilee.

Hyrcanus, on the other hand, began to defend himself. The Persian king realized that his mission had failed and changed his direction, pretending that he had killed people by mistake, and began to do good deeds for the Jews. He invited Herod, Phasaël, and Hyrcanus to meet him peacefully and apologize for his mistake. Herod, however, looked at the invitation with suspicion and did not accept it; he did not come.

Hyrcanus and Phasaël, though not entirely free from suspicion, honored the invitation and came to him.

This Persian representative honored Hyrcanus and Phasaël, Herod's brother. He showed them great love. He took them back to Armenia. As soon as he arrived, he had them imprisoned. Phasaël died of frustration while imprisoned. Hyrcanus was also imprisoned, and his ear was cut off so that he could not be appointed high priest.

He returned to his country holding Hyrcanus in custody. When he arrived in his country, he released Hyrcanus from prison and treated him well. He sent Antigonus to rule over the Jews, giving

him his own official as an assistant. Herod had already begun to rule Galilee and the Temple together. However, when he heard of Antigonius's alliance with the Persian assistant, he immediately sent his wife and children to Mount Surah. His brother, Joseph, the son of Antipatros, lived in Mount Shurah, and Herod ordered his brother Joseph to keep them in a part called Qal'a and provide them with everything they needed. After that, he went to Egypt to go to Rome. The queen of Egypt honored him greatly and gave him a lot of money. She, the aforementioned Cleopatra, assigned him ships and followers. From Egypt, he reached Rome by ship and met his friend Antipas. Antipas received him with honor and brought him before Emperor Augustus. Herod detailed everything the king of Persia had done with Antigonius to Augustus. Augustus honored him greatly at this time. He was crowned and a proclamation was made throughout Rome that he was king. Antipas and Augustus placed him in their midst and presented him to the people in the public square. After the public square, they took him with great honor to the house of the military commander Antipas. Antipas held a great banquet for them. Roman government officials also participated in the banquet. Augustus decided to confirm Herod's loyalty with a great covenant. He had the covenant concerning Herod written on an iron tablet. Antipas set out to march to Persia. Herod also began his journey with him. When they reached Antioch, Antipas continued his journey to Persia with a large army. Herod, for his part, took the remaining army and went to Shomron, where Antigonius was. When Antigonius heard of Herod's arrival, he went to Mount Shurah.

The reason he went to Mount Shurah was to capture Herod's family and his brother Joseph. Antigonius did as he intended. He

captured Herod's wife and children and subjected them to suffering. Joseph and his brother tried to flee to save their lives. Soldiers tried to confront Antigonus to save Herod's family from death. Meanwhile, a heavy rain fell that night. The river, the plain, and all the ponds were flooded with water. Antigonus moved away from where Herod's family was.

Herod heard that his family was under Antigonus's control, so he went to Shurah, where they were. He found Antigonus and engaged him in battle. Herod (Herod's brother) blocked his escape route from the other side. From both sides, they killed many soldiers. At this time, Antigonus fled to the Temple and continued his supplication. Herod pursued him and surrounded the Temple. Antigonus gave a lot of money to the Roman soldiers and begged them to save him from Herod's hand. They tried to fight Herod, but they could not. The Roman soldiers, who were bought with money, could not help the Jews at all.

Antipas, the military commander of Emperor Augustus, went to Persia and killed the Persian king. While there, he became the king of Persia. After controlling Persia for a short time, he made the Persian people pay tribute to the Roman government and crossed the Euphrates River to return to Rome. When Herod heard of Antipas's return, he instructed his brother Joseph to collaborate with the Roman soldiers there to fight Antigonus and then went to Rome to meet Antipas.

After Herod greeted Antipas, he begged him to help him fight Antigonus. Antipas peacefully accepted Herod's request and ordered a large army, led by a commander, for him. When he returned to his country, he wrote a letter to the Armenian people, asking them for their help and support. Herod went to Egypt by ship, as the queen of Egypt was Antipas's wife. While there, he

went to the Temple with the military commander Antipas had given him and with the Roman soldiers.

When Herod arrived in Damascus, he heard that Antigonus had coordinated the Roman soldiers living there, defeated his brother Joseph, killed many of Herod's soldiers, and also killed his brother Joseph. Antigonus cut off Joseph's head and sold it for a lot of money, but the person who bought it buried it. When Caesar, who was sent by Antipas to help Herod, heard of this act, he became very angry. He gathered one hundred and twenty thousand soldiers and prepared to fight Antigonus. Antigonus had a military commander named Pappas. Both of them waited for Antipas in the land of Galilee to engage him in battle. A war broke out between them, and Antigonus was defeated and fled. His military commander, however, fought bravely, but Pappas was killed in the battle. Many of their soldiers perished.

Fruda cut off Pappas's head and took it to Herod. Fruda is Herod's brother. Herod, however, ordered them to bury him. Caesar, who was sent by Antipas, and Herod went together to the Temple. Antigonus was entrenched there and waited for them, and a battle ensued. The war did not subside quickly. The Temple guards became impossible to defeat.

In the sixth hour, Herod's soldiers climbed ladders and killed the Temple guards in their sleep. Herod and Caesar were easily able to enter the Temple enclosure. Roman soldiers also entered the area with them. Herod gave a lot of money to Caesar. He asked Caesar to make the Roman soldiers return the property they had plundered from the Jews. They returned it. Caesar offered many gifts to the House of God. He feared that God would be angry. He entered the country of Qedesh in the month of Tammuz. He entered on the seventeenth day of that month. It was a day of

fasting. He ordered Antigonus to be captured from his hiding place. He found him and imprisoned him. He took him to the land of Egypt.

Antipas, the chief military commander of Emperor Augustus Caesar, was in Egypt, having married the queen of Egypt. Herod, for his part, brought many gifts to Antipas and handed them over. He then begged him to kill Antigonus while he was imprisoned.

Antipas, at Herod's request, killed Antigonus.

Herod had been reigning for three years at this time. It was also the third year of Antipas's military command. Since he had Antigonus killed, Herod began to rule in peace without rivals. He ruled the Jews with force. However, he was good to any Jew who accepted his supremacy. He hunted down and killed any Jew who opposed him and plundered their property. He subjugated all Gentiles who were equal to the Jews. He also made them subordinates of the Jews. He became wealthy because he collected much tribute, and his kingdom was established because the Gentiles brought him much tribute.

It is recalled that we previously mentioned Hyrcanus being taken to Persia. The king of Persia took him to a country called Iraq. After taking him, he allowed him to live in Iraq. He also fulfilled his desires.

While living there, the Jews living in Iraq treated Hyrcanus well.

Herod wrote to the king of Persia, saying, "Hyrcanus is my benefactor, who raised me as a father. I have killed Antigonus, his brother's son, who was his rival. Therefore, send Hyrcanus to me, so I can care for him." He also extended his letter, saying, "If you do not send Hyrcanus to me quickly, I will plead with the Roman king to force you to give him to me."

Herod sent many gifts with the letter to the king of Persia. The king of Persia said to Hyrcanus, "He has asked me to send you. If you wish to go to your country, I will not prevent you. However, it would be better if you did not go, because even though he wrote that he will keep you in good condition, he wants you to fall into his hands so he can kill you. He presented a reason only because your presence here has deprived him of rest. Herod is a wicked sorcerer. You should look at him with suspicion. Do not trust him," he said, speaking to him.

The Jewish rabbis living in Iraq gathered and told Hyrcanus, "Herod is eager to take you by saying he will make you a priest. The mistake you made with Antigonus prevents you from being a priest. You are getting very old. You might think that because you have done him a favor before, he will return your favor. However, people forget favors done for them when their power makes them do so. They only sniff out methods by which they can live in tyranny. Power changes people and compels them to completely break covenants they have made. You are living with us in honor. If you go to the Temple, you do not know what awaits you. It is better to remain with us than to die under Herod's rule."

Hyrcanus did not accept the Persian king's warning and the rabbis' advice. He replied to them, saying, "I have not liked living far from the House of God," and he left Iraq and went to the Temple. When he arrived at the Temple, Herod received him and honored him greatly. He revealed his honor in every public square. Herod easily became someone who could mention Hyrcanus's name in praise. In his heart, however, he was planning to kill him.

Hyrcanus's daughter Alexandra and Herod's wife Mariam knew the secret, so they sent word to Hyrcanus and told him about

Herod's plot, advising him to go elsewhere discreetly. For a while, they sent secret people to keep him safe in a place not far from the Temple. Herod befriended a Jew he hated because he had killed his brother. He also asked this man to make arrangements for Hyrcanus to go to the king of the West.

When this Jew heard that he had formed a front, he felt compassion and did not kill him. On the other hand, he wanted to leave the country because of Hyrcanus. The man made another plot and told him, "I have been sent to give a message to the king of the West so that there may be a covenant of friendship between you and the king of the West." Herod was pleased and told him, "Take my secret message to the king of the West and bring me back his reply."

This man took Herod's message and Hyrcanus's letter and went to the king of the West. The letter written by Hyrcanus was to the effect that Herod was secretly planning to kill him, so he should take him secretly. The Jew delivered Hyrcanus's letter of appeal to the king of the West but hid Herod's letter. The king of the West was pleased that Hyrcanus wanted to come to him and sent people to bring him secretly.

However, the people were caught by Herod's loyal soldiers and confessed, "We were sent to take him secretly to the king of the West because Herod had written a letter to the king of the West."

When Hyrcanus was asked in public why he had sent a secret letter to the king of the West, he denied it. But a draft of Hyrcanus's letter was found, and people who saw Herod pushing Hyrcanus in the public square also betrayed Hyrcanus and testified that it was his writing. Immediately, Hyrcanus was condemned to have his neck cut off. No one opposed the verdict. However, when Hyrcanus was in power, Herod had been saved

after committing a crime punishable by death. Hyrcanus was killed at the age of eighty. He had reigned for forty years. His wife was of the Hasmonean tribe. Hyrcanus, during his reign, was a kind, compassionate, and patient person with good conduct. Earlier, it was stated that Alexander was Hyrcanus's son, and his children were named Aristobulus and Hyrcanus. Two people were also named Aristobulus. The Aristobulus being discussed here is Alexander's son and the brother of Herod's wife, Mariam.

Aristobulus's family was a family that lived a good life.

Herod loved Mariam, but since he killed her grandfather, Hyrcanus, Mariam hated him greatly. Her mother, Alexandra, also hated him very much. Both of them hated him. Alexandra wanted her son, Aristobulus, to become a high priest. She also wished for him to attain the position of his grandfather, Hyrcanus. However, Herod feared that if Aristobulus became a priest, the kindness of his grandfather Hyrcanus would be renewed in the Temple, and it would become a threat to his reign. Therefore, Herod wanted to abolish the priesthood of the Hasmonean tribe, because he feared that they could use the priesthood as a stepping stone to kingship.

Herod chose a man who was not of the priestly lineage and made him high priest. At this, Herod's mother-in-law, Alexandra, and Herod's wife, Mariam, intensified their hatred for Herod. There was a close friendship between Herod's mother-in-law, Alexandra, and Cleopatra, the queen of Egypt, who married Antipas. They exchanged gifts.

Alexandra wrote a letter to Cleopatra, the queen of Egypt, asking her to tell her husband, Antipas, to depose the person he had appointed to the priesthood and to appoint her son, Aristobulus, as high priest, and to order Herod to do so. Cleopatra told this to

her husband, Antipas, and Antipas, through his loyal messenger, sent a message to Herod, ordering him to depose the appointed individual and appoint Aristobulus as high priest.

Herod read Antipas's letter and said, "It has shamed me." He also gave the messenger a reply stating, "Once a priest is appointed, religion does not permit his removal. Priesthood is for life.

Replacing a priest unless he dies is absolutely forbidden. We must not violate our law. Such an appointment is not something that comes and goes." He also wrote the same words to Antipas.

When Antipas came to the Temple, he saw Mariam and her brother Aristobulus. The messenger and Aristobulus were very much amazed by their beauty. This messenger said to Alexandra, "Give me a picture of your two children, and I will give it to the king. Then Antipas will do everything you wish."

Alexandra did as the messenger told her, as she was very eager for her son, Aristobulus, to be appointed. When Antipas saw Aristobulus's picture, he was very impressed. Antipas then sent a message to Herod, asking him to send Aristobulus to him. He warned him that if he did not send him quickly, they would fall out.

When Herod received this message, he was shocked and deposed the man he had appointed as high priest and made Aristobulus high priest.

Having done this, Herod wrote to Antipas, saying, "I previously did not appoint Aristobulus as high priest because I did not want to corrupt the law of the priests. But now, to honor your command, I have appointed him. However, as I told you, a person appointed as high priest is not allowed to leave the Temple and go anywhere. A king is allowed to move anywhere, but a high priest is not allowed to leave the Temple and go anywhere. His duty is

only to perform the mission of the House of God. If I force him to come to you, all the Jews will be disturbed."

Antipas received and read Herod's letter and remained silent. He closed the matter of Aristobulus coming to him. Aristobulus was seventeen years old at this time. In Jewish law, priesthood was indeed a lifelong position. Antiochus was the first to violate this law. Pompey repeated it. Antipas the Second, in his disgrace, mutilated Antigonus and cut off his ear to prevent him from being appointed high priest. The third (in deposing a priest) was Herod, because he feared Antipas and deposed the one he had initially appointed and appointed Aristobulus.

Herod assumed that the resentment of his mother-in-law Alexandra and his wife Mariam would end there. However, Herod always feared Alexandra lest people incite her against him. He had placed a spy on her to report everything she said daily without her knowledge.

Alexandra wrote a letter to Cleopatra, the queen of Egypt, asking for her help and support for her son, Aristobulus. Cleopatra, in turn, wrote a letter of advice to Alexandra, telling her to somehow leave the land of Judea and come to Egypt. She also sent canoes with many escorts to bring her. The canoes that came to take Alexandra lined up at the port called Haifa. They called Alexandra to come. But she could not leave. She and Aristobulus entered coffins and began to leave. However, the spy told Herod the situation. When the coffin was opened, both of them were found in two coffins each. Herod was very angry and reprimanded them for their mistake, but he forgave them and sent them back to their homes. After that, the Feast of Tabernacles arrived. For this reason, people gathered at the Temple and stood separately. The seventeen-year-old Aristobulus entered the Holy of Holies

wearing the high priest's vestments. The Jewish people were pleased and loved him greatly when they saw him wearing the high priest's vestments with his handsome natural beauty.

This, however, was not acceptable to Herod. Aristobulus's elevation from high priest aroused severe jealousy in him, lest he ascend to kingship. When the Feast of Tabernacles ended, the kings of Israel had a tradition of going to a garden in Jericho. They would stay there for a few days. Taking this custom as a pretext, Herod went to the aforementioned garden. The garden was very pleasant. While Herod was there, Aristobulus, in his capacity as high priest, was also with him. The king's family and his friends were also there. Herod placed Aristobulus by his side and placed his remaining followers according to their rank. A lunch invitation was also made there, and everyone ate, drank, and rejoiced.

At this time, when the sun became very hot, Herod began to wander among the gardens. He was observing the springs of water flowing from every direction. Aristobulus was also with him.

The king's servants were rushing to bathe in the water. At this time, Herod secretly told his servants, "Call Aristobulus to swim with you. While swimming together, kill him by drowning him while singing and joking so that he doesn't suspect anything. Don't leave him until you confirm his death." They did as he told them and brought out his body, pretending that he had drowned himself.

The Jewish people wept bitterly over his death and were deeply saddened. Herod also wept, regretting having Aristobulus killed. Aristobulus died at the age of seventeen, without adding a single year. Herod buried him with great honor. He did not remain high

priest for a full year. Alexandra again hated Herod for this. His daughter, Herod's wife Mariam, also hated him.

Herod's mother was an Idumaeen. His wife Mariam used to ridicule her because of this lineage. Her grandmother used to tell Herod about this. But Herod would silently tolerate Mariam's ridicule that was told by his mother.

Herod loved Mariam very much, but Mariam would insult and mock Herod's mother and sister, going so far as to call them Idumaeans. As time went on, the conflict escalated. Herod's sister was cunning, and as we will explain later, she carried out many deceitful acts.

Cleopatra was not only cunning but also skilled in adorning herself with rewards. Furthermore, the types of perfumes she used were unmatched. Even though she was an old woman, she still appeared as a young maiden. There was no woman anywhere who appeared as perfectly adorned as she was. Since she married Antipas, she swayed his conscience in the direction she desired. Guided by her advice, he began to kill the kings of many countries under the Roman government and plunder their property.

He would unjustly kill kings and plunder their property, and torment their wives and children in slavery. Because of this, many hated Antipas. This matter reached Emperor Augustus Caesar. Augustus condemned the act and hated him greatly. Cleopatra advised Antipas to kill Herod, the king of the Jews. However, he did not kill him because he knew that Herod was in favor with Emperor Augustus. She also advised him to betray Emperor Augustus.

Antipas, guided by his wife Cleopatra, betrayed Augustus and prepared to fight him. Herod also lined up with him and ordered

him to go and fight Emperor Augustus Caesar. Herod accepted Antipas's command and went to Egypt first to march with him to fight Augustus.

At this time, Antipas told Herod, "If you and I leave the country together, the kings of the Gentiles whom we rule might betray us.

I know that the kings of the Gentiles fear you. Therefore, it is better for you to stay and guard both our territories. The Arabs have already begun to say they will not obey. You go to them and subdue them."

Having told this to Herod, Antipas marched towards Rome to fight Augustus. Herod, for his part, went to the land where the Arabs lived. Cleopatra did not like Herod. She wanted him to die so she could take over his kingdom. She had the kingdoms of other countries under her rule and wished to do the same with Herod's territory.

Hyrcanus's daughter, Alexandra, secretly and constantly pleaded with Herod to kill her in any way she could. As Antipas had ordered, Herod returned to the land of Judea before going to fight the Arabs. From there, he continued his journey to the Arabs to carry out his mission. Cleopatra sent her official, known as "The Blind," to march with Herod, bringing a large army. She also pretended that he was going to help Herod. However, when the war with the Arabs intensified, she advised him to abandon Herod, flee to Galilee, and help the Arabs so that Herod would be killed. Because of the deception carried out by Cleopatra's messenger, The Blind, many of Herod's Jewish followers perished, but The Blind was not successful.

Thousands of soldiers from the Jews and The Blind's followers perished, but Herod was not harmed. Instead, he returned to the land of Judea.

In that month, a great earthquake occurred in many places. Such a severe earthquake had not been seen on earth except in the time of Agrippa. Many people perished in the earthquake. Herod and all the Jews were greatly terrified by the earthquake. Because of this, Herod, consulting with the Jews, said, "I must establish peace with all the Gentiles, except the Western King." All the Gentiles made peace with Herod, except the Western King, who said he would not reconcile with Herod because much blood had been shed between them. Instead of receiving the messengers sent by Herod for a peace mission, he killed them.

Herod heard of the killing of the messengers and gathered the Jewish people, saying, "The Western King killed our messengers who were sent for peace. Instead, he gave us evil. We should not let this go so that the Gentiles will mock us. Anyone who hears this will curse us. There has never been a time when you did not fight with the Gentiles for the sake of God's religion. Now, you must continue the war you are fighting for the sake of God. By this act, you will remove the mockery from your enemies. Even the earthquake did not kill your people; it killed the Gentiles. It is your responsibility to destroy God's enemies. The Arabs have conspired with the Egyptian queen. God did not destroy us. Now, trust in God and prepare for war. Capture them before they capture you. Be strong like your forefathers..."

When the Jewish men heard Herod's discourse, they emotionally rose up for war. They promised Herod that they would not retreat with God's help. He praised them and, after having them bring many offerings to God, he went to the West for war. He killed many people from the West. Many fled from the war and hid in their homes. Herod surrounded them for five full days, cutting off their entry and exit. They were perishing from thirst.

They sent many messengers to Herod with money, begging him to allow them to go out and get water. But Herod did not accept their proposal. He did not accept their gifts. When their suffering became severe, they said, "Let's fight and break free," and they went out to fight bravely. Herod killed and defeated them and caused great destruction in their country. The remaining ones submitted to him completely. They promised him to pay tribute every year.

He returned to the Temple after bringing in the water. From that time on, the Western countries became subject to him.

Antipas went to Rome to fight Augustus and engaged him in battle. Augustus had prepared and was waiting for him, so he defeated him, forcing many of his soldiers to flee, and he returned from Rome in disgrace. When Herod heard of Antipas's defeat and return, he quickly rose to receive him. He told them to carry out all his orders. He sent his sister and mother to Qana'a in Mount Tarah through his brother named Fruda. He sent Alexandra and his wife Mariam to a country called Alexandria. He sent his sister's husband, Josephus Simon, with them. He ordered these two men to kill Alexandra and Mariam on the way.

At this time, pretending to receive Antipas, he went to Egypt, took many gifts, and went to Rome. Augustus knew of Herod's and Antipas's friendship. As soon as Herod arrived, Augustus ordered his crown to be removed, fearing that he would not betray him. Standing before Augustus, Herod bowed trembling, saying, "You victorious and supreme Emperor Caesar, you have every right to be angry with me. The reason I loved Antipas is because he was the one who crowned me with the crown you have now removed from my head. He always helped me, and I also helped him. In doing so, I am guilty, so forgive me. However, when he came to

fight you, I did not follow him. I did not raise my hand against you. Instead, I fought the Arabs who betrayed you. I toiled greatly in this. Antipas's betrayal of you and his decision to fight you has greatly saddened me. I prefer to die than to betray you and listen to Antipas's advice. It seems to me that it was Cleopatra, the sorceress, who led Antipas to all this betrayal and destruction. King, even if you remove my crown from my head, my respect and admiration for you will not diminish. If you allow me to live, I will never deviate from serving you my entire life. I will cherish your love..." and he uttered many deceitful words.

When Augustus saw him from afar, he had initially said, "Kill him!" But later, he was captivated and changed his mind. He honored him greatly and said, "Antipas has paid the price for his betrayal. But we are pleased that you have expressed in your words that you have not departed from our love. Antipas betrayed us by listening to the advice of the sorceress Cleopatra. But we believe that you will continue to defeat our enemies in the future."

Immediately, he put the crown back on his head and gave him great honor and respect. Immediately, Emperor Augustus went to Egypt. Herod also followed him there. He killed the queen of Egypt. He handed over all the property that Antipas had given her to Herod. After accomplishing this, when Augustus returned to Rome, Herod returned to the Temple.

As previously stated, when Herod set out for Rome, we explained that he had conspired with two men to take them elsewhere and kill them. Aristobulus and Mariam were Alexandra's children. Also, Hyrcanus was Alexandra's father. Because Herod had Hyrcanus and Aristobulus killed, the two mother and daughter (Alexandra and Mariam) hated him intensely, and it has been repeatedly stated that this hatred brought them to this point. Herod himself

had sworn Josephus Simon to kill Alexandra and Mariam, as if he himself had been killed in Rome. Alexandra and Mariam knew that he intended to kill them, and their hatred for him greatly increased. When he returned from Rome, they also returned to their birthplace.

From that time on, he waited for an opportune time for the two, mother and daughter, but outwardly, he showed them extreme gentleness. The matter between Mariam and Herod's sister also escalated. Mariam verbally abused Herod's sister, and she went to the king and accused Mariam, adding even more to what she had not said, telling Herod, "When you went to Rome, my husband, Joseph, met Mariam." Herod, however, did not accept her statement, because he knew that Mariam, though an incomparably beautiful woman, did not have an adulterous character, but rather a stubborn one. Moreover, he knew that she would allow herself to be killed on this pretext.

Herod began to plead with his wife Mariam, saying, "I am deeply in love with you, but you never love me. Tell me clearly what you have heard about me." At this time, she put everything else aside and said to him, "Sir, if you love me, why did you order Joseph and Salome to kill me? Have you ever seen a man who kills his friend?" At this time, Herod thought, "If my sister's husband had not met her, she would not have revealed this secret."

Immediately, he rose in anger and went. From this time on, Herod hated Mariam to the end and kept the secret from her. Herod's sister, knowing that Herod suspected Mariam of being involved with Joseph, was overjoyed. She continued her efforts to fulfill her goal by calling Herod's messengers and telling them all sorts of false accusations, urging them to bear false witness against her. They were given a lot of money to bear false witness. She also

gave poison to her informer and showed it to Herod, telling him, "Mariam gave me this to add to your food." He did so.

Herod was greatly enraged by this and said, "Give it to one of the wrongdoers, add it to their food, give it to the one sentenced to death." He also put Mariam in prison until the judges assembled. At this time, Herod's sister wanted the matter not to be delayed.

She was very frightened that Mariam's innocence would be revealed or that her cunning would be known when the judges investigated the matter. Or, she urged that Mariam be killed without delay. She also went to Herod with people and said, "Herod, if you do not kill Mariam now, your own servants and her family will fall and rise, pleading with you not to kill her, and they will weaken you from being cruel to her." The accusers who came with her also harassed him, saying, "She is a disrespectful harlot and disorderly! Let her be killed now!" At this time, he said to them, "I have handed her over to you, so do as you wish with her."

Immediately, they went to the place where Mariam was terribly imprisoned. They took her outside the city to kill her. Herod's sister gathered many women and waited for them on the road to surround her and mock her. They called her an Idumaeen adulteress and insulted her with things she had never done. But she remained silent, as if fate had turned against her. She did not answer anyone. Her face did not show sadness, nor was her conscience disturbed. She showed no fear at all. She appeared as resolute as her people, the Hasmonean tribe, for their people do not show fear when led to death.

Without fear, she prepared her neck and gave it to them, saying, "Cut it off." This incomparably beautiful woman, full of courage and beauty, bid farewell to this world. There was no one in her

time who could compare to her in beauty. In addition, she was eloquent, never lied, and did not know flattery. Her conscience was pure, and her faith was upright. She did not offend anyone with insults. But she did not like to humble herself before the arrogant. Because of this, she would criticize, rebuke, and discredit Herod and his family for their barbaric acts. Herod did not rejoice in having Mariam killed. Instead, he regretted it. Terror gripped his heart. He suffered from a severe illness and was near death.

Herod knew that Alexandra wanted to kill him cunningly, so he ordered her to be killed from where she was. Mariam had given birth to two children for Herod, and she named them Alexander and Aristobulus.

Herod, falsely suspecting that his wife Mariam had met someone, and because his sister, in an effort to make Mariam hated and killed, told him that her husband Joseph had betrayed Mariam, Herod killed Joseph and married his sister to an Edomite, sending him to Edom as a governor. Edomites at that time were circumcised and observed the law of Moses. King Hyrcanus I had forced them to do so.

Herod ordered him to advise them to abandon idol worship if they observed the law of Moses and were circumcised. But Crispus hated Herod's sister for her bad character and betrayed Herod.

Herod's sister begged Herod to divorce her from Crispus. It is known that when the Jews were divided into three groups, the group called Hasmoneans constituted the third part. Supporters of the Hasmonean group, escaping from being killed by Herod, would reach the area ruled by Crispus, and he would hide them in the Roman territory for twelve years.

Herod's sister told Herod about the Hasmoneans living there.

Herod forcibly brought them and killed them. He also killed his sister's husband, Crispus. From this, Herod massacred all Jewish people called the Hasmonean party without exception. Everyone who opposed Herod was hunted down.

When their mother was killed, these children were in Rome. Their father Herod had sent them there to learn Roman writings and language. Herod abolished many laws of Moses, but he built the Temple in good condition. He also had his own image and the images of the kings he defeated and killed engraved on the Temple wall. He made the Temple courtyard very spacious. In the Temple courtyard, he built a field where horses would race, pulling chariots, like an arena.

Around the Temple, he established a park for wild animals, and he placed a lioness in the park and would let her loose to kill people. He said he would give a lot of money to anyone who defeated her. The good Jewish people did not like Herod at all. Many tried to kill Herod cunningly, but they failed because he was a tyrannical king brought by God for punishment. Through his spies, he would learn about their plots and destroy them.

Many say that he would change his appearance and go among the people, distinguishing between his friends and enemies. Because of this, it was impossible to live a peaceful life among the Jews. He also had supporting parties. He was able to reign with the support of the Almotazila, Hillel, and Hasmonean groups. Among the rabbis, he respected the groups called the Essenes very much.

Among these groups of rabbis, there was a kind and clever man named Manahem. When Herod was a child and went to Manahem to learn, there is a story that Manahem, knowing that

Herod would reign in the future, said to him, "Live long, O king!" Herod, thinking he was mocking him, was angered and insulted Manahem. Manahem then whipped him and said, "Why did you insult me? Again, my friend, God has made you king. But do not forget my whipping and my words. You will do many evil deeds when you become king. Just pay close attention to what I tell you. "But I advise you to do good and abandon evil when you become king. I already understand that you will not accept my advice. You will strive for evil." After saying this, Manahem left him. And the story goes that Herod wept, saying, "Why did he hit me?"

When Herod grew up, he remembered Manahem's prophecy. At this time, Manahem was very old. Herod asked Manahem, "You prophesied that I would reign. Now tell me how many years I will remain king." But Manahem remained silent because he knew that it would end quickly. Herod repeatedly asked Manahem, but he would not answer him. So Herod said, "Will I reign for about ten more years?" Manahem then replied, "It could be ten or more." And Herod hoped that he would remain for a long time. Herod rebuilt the city of Samaria and named it Sebaste. In it, he built a hall for Emperor Augustus Caesar.

He also founded the city of Caesarea and built a good wall there. Herod founded many cities and built many walls. For this, he was praised. Herod also had another reason for being praised. In his 13th year of reign, there was a famine throughout the land of Judea, and likewise in the Gentile countries. Everyone under his rule suffered from famine. In contrast, there was abundance in Egypt. He took money from his treasury and bought grain by ships from Egypt, saving his people from dying of hunger. He also wrote a letter to Emperor Augustus Caesar, asking him to send grain because the people were hungry. Emperor Augustus

Caesar ordered that grain be delivered immediately to all those who were hungry from Rome and Egypt, by land with camels and by sea with ships. He also issued an order that those who had money should buy the grain at the price it was at the time of abundance.

Historians describe that he would bake much bread and feed the weak, supporting them. The blind and those without hands and feet all had a good time during Herod's reign. Young people, on the other hand, worked daily and permanently with their strength so that they could get food during the famine. Herod helped the people in this way until God passed the time of famine. During this famine, Herod fed five hundred thousand people.

Because of this act, Jews and Gentiles alike admired him and praised him. He also made the governments of the surrounding countries forget his previous bad deeds. Having done this, he realized that all the people loved him greatly and that no one would oppose him. So he decided to demolish the Temple from its foundation and build the first Temple that Solomon had built.

In the eighteenth year of his reign, he gathered the Jewish elders according to their rank and said, "Behold, God has expanded our kingdom. But since Rome has been allowed to rule the world, they are our superiors. However, we have brought our country under our control, and the Romans love us and support us. God has done this for us.

"The current work on the Temple was ordered by the Persian king when our fathers returned from captivity. They were not allowed to do more than this. They did not have the means to do as much as they were allowed. Since then, the Greeks have been ruling them.

They were ruled by the Greeks until the Hasmonean priests liberated them. But later, God liberated them through the priests.

The Hasmonean children lived by confronting the enemy, and they did not have time for work. But now, everything is ready for us to build the Temple.

"It is worthless if we build our private homes with amazing work, but it is worthwhile if we build the Temple beautifully. I am pleased to completely demolish the House of God and rebuild it as Solomon built it. The House of God is the pillar of our faith. Our beauty, our glory, and our pride are in the beauty of the House of God. 'Because we have built His house, God will draw us near to Him, and in the house we have built, we will praise God.'"

As the historian recorded, the Jews were temporarily confused and remained silent. They did not answer him. In their minds, they wondered if he could demolish it but also complete its construction. He understood why they were silent and told them, "I will not attempt to demolish the Temple until I have prepared all the necessary materials for the building."

Herod first gathered stones, wood, silver, gold, iron, and other materials. It took him seven years just to gather the building tools.

He also gathered ten thousand craftsmen. Since no one was allowed to enter the Holy of Holies, he selected one thousand priests. When the Jewish people saw all these preparations, they were ready to say that it must be built. Herod quickly demolished the old building and prepared a design for Solomon's Temple. He also designed an additional, magnificent building and had it adorned with gold and silver.

The time spent on the work and the number of many wise men who participated in the building are recorded in another Jewish book. "The history and the property given by Herod to the builders and all that was added to the building, the wood that Herod gave to the Jews and their news," the compiler of this book also

recorded that it took eight years for the building to be completed from its beginning. In the first year of the Temple's commencement, there was no rain. This shows that it was God's will for the work not to be hindered.

When the Temple work was completed, Herod ordered offerings to be brought. He ordered sacrifices to be offered. He also ordered sacrifices of atonement for his own sins and the sins of all the people. Herod proclaimed that the year in which he built this Temple should be a year of joy. The entire people spent that year in spiritual joy, praising and honoring God.

Herod had sent his sons, Alexander and Aristobulus, to Rome for education, and they were studying Roman wisdom there. When they heard that their mother Mariam had been killed, they were greatly disturbed. They returned from Rome to the Temple and did not give their father Herod the respect due to a father, for they were greatly saddened by their mother's murder at his hands.

Herod had a wife named Risis, and she had given birth to one son named Antipas. Because he loved Mariam above all, he expelled Risis and her son Antipas from his house. He loved Mariam's children, Alexander and Aristobulus, very much. But when he killed Mariam and criticized her children, he brought Risis and her son Antipas back into his house. He appointed Antipas to the position next to him and gave him full authority.

Antipas feared that Mariam's children, Alexander and Aristobulus, would challenge his authority after Herod. He also knew that because Mariam was from a lineage of great priests, her children had great acceptance among the Jews. Risis, however, even though she was of Jewish descent, was not from a royal or priestly lineage. Therefore, Risis urged Herod to remove Alexander and Aristobulus while he was alive and to honor her

son. She, for her part, was looking for a reason to have them both killed.

Antipas told Herod the following fabricated words: "They say, 'We can rule the country better than our father Herod. He is not fit for kingship. Since our mother is superior to all, there is no doubt that the kingdom belongs to us.'" They even went further and conspired to kill you. They are waiting for an opportunity to avenge themselves once you have killed them.

Antipas did not stop there. He bought people with benefits and presented all sorts of accusations against Alexander to Herod, leading to their death. For a time, he made both Alexander and Aristobulus stay away from his house. In the meantime, Herod went to pay homage to Emperor Augustus Caesar. He took Alexander with him. He accused his own son to Emperor Augustus Caesar, saying, "He wants to kill me because of his mother's resentment."

Emperor Augustus Caesar asked Alexander, "Why do you upset your father to such an extent?" Alexander replied, "My grief is over my mother's death, for she was killed without sin. Even animals grieve when separated from their mothers. When you look at it this way, how can I not grieve when I miss my mother, when she was taken from me, and when I know her death was unjust? But his saying that he wants to kill me is an absolute lie before God. God says, 'Honor your father and your mother together.' I am guided by this. I have no intention of destroying my father. I will stand before him on the Day of Judgment. But my brother Antipas is trying to make you kill us, just as you killed our mother."

Everyone, including Augustus, wept at Alexander's words. Immediately, Emperor Augustus Caesar ordered Herod to stop

listening to the accusations of the informers against Alexander and his brother Aristobulus and to restore them to their former positions. He also ordered Alexander to kiss his father's feet, and he did so. He then ordered Herod to embrace and kiss his son Alexander, and he did so.

Following this, Herod swore an oath that he would never again hate his sons Aristobulus and Alexander, and that he would forget the grief of their unjustly murdered mother. Herod stayed in Rome for a few days and then returned to the Temple.

As the historian relates, when Herod returned to the Temple, he gathered his friends and the Jewish rabbis. He also had his three sons present at the meeting and said, "The house of the honorable and exalted God has made our kingdom rise. (The three sons of Herod mentioned are Alexander, Aristobulus, and Antipas.) Therefore, I wished to divide it among my three sons. I will divide it equally; I will not give a little to one and a lot to another. You, the participants in this meeting, also support me in this. And all of you, my friends, obey them in a righteous way and do not create trouble for them. Rejoice and do not create hatred among them, and do not tell them sad things. For words disturb the heart, just as the wind disturbs the water of the sea, so words disturb the human heart."

"Do not drink too much in their presence, and do not engage in too much playful talk with them. Too much playful talk and joking will reveal their secrets. And when you hear their secrets, you will be forced to tell one to another. If you accuse one to another, it can be a cause for your downfall and a reason for their destruction." Then he turned to his three sons and said, "Keep the command of God. If you do this, your days will be many, and your lives will be prosperous. You will find beauty and grace in this

world and in the world to come." And he embraced and kissed each of them.

As the author of this history explained, Herod's words did not create a good situation among his sons. As is known, Herod had appointed Antipas as superior to all after himself, but now he was to be demoted. Therefore, he felt great sadness. Alexander and Aristobulus, for their part, understood that Antipas was not truly ready to share power with them.

Antipas did not stop speaking kindly but secretly plotting against his brothers. When he met them, he pretended to be humble and spoke words of honor and brotherhood. But in his heart, he was preparing a way to kill both of them. He prepared people skilled in falsehood and accusation and sent them to Herod to cause conflict with him, making falsehood appear as truth. Herod, however, did not diminish his love for these children after hearing the accusations of the informers. Antipas also cunningly entangled Herod's brother, Pheroras, and his sister Salome. These men and women told Herod that Alexander and Aristobulus were preparing to kill him and Antipas. Herod believed his brother Pheroras to be truthful. Salome, as an informer, had already caused the death of Alexander's mother Mariam and her husband Joseph, and Herod accepted her words. Pheroras and Salome made Alexander and Aristobulus hateful to Herod. Antipas also followed these informers and went to Herod, bringing their mission of destruction and sorcery to completion.

Herod was enraged and imprisoned Alexander and Aristobulus.

Archelaus, the king of Cappadocia, who was Alexander's father-in-law, came to the Temple to free his son-in-law Alexander.

This king was intelligent, wise, and discerning. When he met Herod, Herod expressed his sorrow over his sons. Archelaus

replied to Herod, saying, "I am sure that if my daughter, Alexander's wife, and her husband Alexander decided to kill you, she would not hide it from him. She should have told you this secret. If she heard it and hid it, I will kill my own daughter. If she did not know about it, I will separate her from him and take her away."

Archelaus repeatedly urged Herod to investigate the situation thoroughly. After much effort, he saw that Herod was relenting and softening, and he said to him, "Herod, as you are getting old, you seek rest and tranquility. But instead, you have encountered sorrow and frustration. Your heart may become ill with grief. I have been able to investigate the matter of your sons, Alexander and Aristobulus. You have given them everything, but people have told you that they are conspiring to kill you. The person who told you this is a person who cares neither for them nor for you. Therefore, the informer is the one who should be killed for doing this, not the person against whom the accusation was made." Herod asked Archelaus, "Who invented this story that Aristobulus and Alexander wanted to kill you?" Archelaus replied, "This was invented by Antipas and Pheroras." When Herod understood this from Archelaus, he was angry with his brother Pheroras and kept him away from him. At this time, Pheroras feared for his life and went to Archelaus, confessed his mistake, and begged Archelaus to appease Herod's anger.

Archelaus said, "I have exhausted myself trying to make Herod abandon his hatred for you. And you, confess before him that you have wrongly condemned your sons as murderers and that you have committed a mistake." After they made this agreement, Archelaus came to Herod a few days later and said to Herod, "If a person is sick in his arm, a doctor tries to heal the sick part. He

does not rush to cut off the sick part. Human kinship is also like this. When a problem arises among your family, it is possible to maintain the peace and health of the family by identifying and eliminating the problem. Rushing to kill the person called 'the wrongdoer' does not bring a solution. One can find the answer by asking, 'Who is my enemy?' Pheroras is one of your family members. Now you hate him and are angry with him. He expresses his remorse for the mistake he committed. He has begged me to plead with you. Allow him to speak and let him come near."

Herod said to Archelaus, "I have accepted your plea. Let Pheroras come and confess his mistake." Then Pheroras was called to approach Herod. Pheroras approached and admitted that he had falsely caused conflict between Herod and his sons. When Herod asked him, "Why did you do this?" he replied, "I did this because you took away my female slave." At this time, Herod said to Archelaus, "For your sake, I have forgiven my brother's mistake. Just as a health professional does not stop treating a sick person until he is cured, so you have toiled to cure the human-made illness that has risen against me," and he thanked him.

Herod ordered his imprisoned sons, Alexander and Aristobulus, to be released. He also gave Archelaus a lot of money. He also ordered other great people to give financial gifts to Archelaus. They did so. When Archelaus returned to his country, Herod traveled a long way to send him off, and everyone who went with Herod to send him off returned with Herod to their homes. Antipas was saddened when he learned that his father Herod had forgiven Alexander and released him from prison. Without delay, he continued his sorcery. He gave a lot of money and prepared an

informer who was ready to destroy them again. This informer went back and forth, changing Herod's mind and leading to their re-imprisonment. People who witnessed this were greatly shocked but were absolutely unable to protest.

There was an old man among the army whose son was a friend of Herod's son Alexander. This old man was deeply saddened by the suffering of Alexander and his companions. Especially when they were imprisoned again, he got a headache from his grief. Like others, he could not bear his sorrow. He also had the right to approach the king. Being among the army, he cried out loudly, "Alas!" He shouted, "Truth has been killed! Falsehood has taken over! Justice has departed from the world...!"

He also said to Herod, "Where is the king who loves his enemy and hates his friend? Herod, where is your mind? Where have your counsel and wisdom gone? You accept the words of your enemies. They are deceiving you to kill your children, and later, when you are left alone, they will kill you."

However, Alexander's and Aristobulus's enemies said, "Herod, this old man is not shouting because he loves you. He does not love your children either. But because he hates you in his heart, he is trying to express his hatred through this. He also assumes that you have no heart because he is shouting. He is your archenemy, not your friend. However, this old man has received a lot of money from your enemies to kill you," thus harassing Herod with pretense. Herod, provoked by them, ordered the old man to be quickly seized and killed in a cruel manner. He also ordered Mazeus, the army commander, and the old man's son, who was Alexander's friend, to be seized and killed together because they had conspired. It was decided by Herod that the old man's son and Alexander's friend should also suffer. Mazeus and the old

man were severely beaten during interrogation but did not utter a word. However, the young man, the old man's son, because his suffering was severe, confessed that what the informers were saying was true. He was forced to babble this to escape the suffering, and he thought this would save his father from death, but it was of no use. Herod ordered his father, Mazeus, and the young man to be killed, and they were immediately killed.

He had Alexander and Aristobulus taken to a place called Sebaste again and killed them there. Their bodies were crucified. Alexander had two children named Alexander and Berenice. Their mother was the daughter of King Archelaus of Cappadocia. Aristobulus, for his part, had children named Aristobulus, Agrippa, and Herod. Agrippa became king after Antipas. This son of Aristobulus, named Herod, also left two children.

When Alexander and Aristobulus (Herod's sons) were killed, their brother Antipas rejoiced greatly and got what he desired. The people hated Antipas greatly. Antipas, however, did not stop at this wicked deed. He also wanted to destroy their children. After Herod had unjustly killed his own sons, he realized that he had killed them based on falsehood and greatly regretted it. Therefore, he brought near the children of Aristobulus and Alexander and treated them well.

Herod gathered the great officials of his palace and said, "I have wounded my soul with my soul. I have killed my children. My weeping, my sorrow, and my grief are severe. Furthermore, as I am getting old, I am close to death. I killed my children by merely listening to false words. Their unjust killing has become a fire and burned my conscience. I must treat their children with great compassion and care. They are still young. I must pay a high price for them in place of their fathers."

He said to his brother Pheroras, "I have allowed you to marry your daughter, Berenice, to Alexander's son, to be a father to him." He also told his cunning son Antipas, "I will allow you to marry your daughter to your brother Aristobulus's son, to be a father to him." At this time, Pheroras and Antipas could not oppose Herod. So they agreed, but in their hearts, they were greatly displeased. Herod, on the other hand, believed the matter according to their law.

The officials who attended the meeting were pleased with Herod's action, for Herod had placed them as witnesses. Berenice, daughter of Alexander, was the granddaughter of King Archelaus of Cappadocia. Therefore, the informer Pheroras feared that Berenice would cause trouble with her grandfather's support. Pheroras advised Herod to change the direction of the marriage process he had started because of King Archelaus's deception. Through his sorcery, he changed the said marriage. Meanwhile, Herod sent that sorcerer Antipas to Emperor Augustus Caesar in Rome to renew his covenant. Herod heard that his brother Pheroras wished for his death and removed him from his house. He also forbade him from entering.

Pheroras became seriously ill. Herod also sent someone to see him before he died. Herod was filled with compassion and went to see him. When he saw him in the throes of death, he wept for him. He comforted his children and family, saying that he would help them after their father's death. Pheroras died. Herod mourned his brother's death and buried him in his ancestors' tomb. As soon as Pheroras died, Herod received information that Pheroras had been plotting against him. Herod investigated this matter and interrogated Pheroras's female and male slaves. They revealed that Antipas and Pheroras used to meet in the house

and spend the whole night plotting against him. They also revealed that they used to gather at Antipas's mother Risis's house.

One of the slaves said, "One day, this Herod is a man-eating beast. He is more than a beast. A beast does not eat its children, but this one ate his children and his wife. He will not hesitate to kill us either. Let's use some method to kill him before he kills us. If we don't do this, his killing us is inevitable. After we kill him, we will also kill those grandchildren." Pheroras said, "He has started to alienate me. He might kill me next." Antipas also said, "I heard him saying that he is alienating me too." When Antipas set out for Rome, Antipas told Pheroras to kill him and wait for him. His desire was to become king when he returned.

Herod regarded Pheroras and Antipas as enemies. He discovered that they were meeting and planning to kill his children, his wife, and other friends, and finally to kill him. The secretary of Antipas's treasury was interrogated and revealed that everything that was said was true. Herod subjected this man to much torture during the interrogation. Because he tortured him, he revealed all the secrets. Pheroras and Antipas had received poison from the Egyptian king named Archelaus, and Antipas had given this poison to Pheroras. Pheroras, in turn, had given the poison to be carefully kept, saying that he was waiting for the right time to kill Herod with it. Antipas had given instructions to Pheroras, saying, "If my father Herod is killed while I am present, the people will suspect that I had him killed. But if he is killed when I am not present, no one will suspect me."

Herod sent for Pheroras's wife to bring the poison she had kept. At this time, she was shocked and fell from a high place. Her fall was meant to kill her, but she did not die. However, her body was

severely broken, causing her much suffering. Even in this condition, they carried her to Herod. Herod, being angry, ordered her to detail his brother's actions. Pheroras had died recently. So, the woman said to Herod, "King, my life would have been better if I had died with Pheroras. But instead, I survived and was exposed to evil. When he was about to die, he called me. When you came to visit him and left, he called me again and said, 'Did you see how my brother Herod hates me? He promised me that he would take good care of my children after me. But the rebellious Antipas misled me and forced me to kill him. Antipas gave me the poison to drink. But I was disgusted by this and did not use it. Herod is the son of my father and mother. Therefore, so that God would not punish me, I poured the poison onto the ground. If the poison had remained undiluted, Antipas might have used it to kill my brother.' He told me this, so I poured it. But I kept a small amount as a sign to show you," and she brought the container with the poison and showed it to him. There was some residue of the poison in the container.

Herod ordered the remaining poison to be carefully kept and also ordered wise men to provide medical treatment for the woman, who was suffering from her fall and broken bones. Herod urgently called Antipas to return from Rome. When Antipas returned, Emperor Augustus Caesar's envoy also set out to come with him. As Antipas returned on his way, he reached Caesarea and heard that his father's brother Pheroras had died. He also heard that Herod was angry with Antipas's mother Risis and that she had been stripped of her position as lady. Risis was Herod's wife whom he had married before Mariam.

Antipas greatly feared that Herod himself might have heard the secret about killing Herod that he and Pheroras had conspired.

He wanted to flee elsewhere, but Herod's loyal soldiers had followed him and prevented him from fleeing anywhere. They said, "It is better if you confess your mistake. He might show you mercy." Antipas agreed to their words and returned to the Temple.

When he arrived at the area, no one welcomed him as usual. Everyone knew that Herod hated him, and even those who liked him did not welcome him because they feared Herod. As soon as Antipas arrived, Herod sent soldiers to strictly guard him so that he would not flee anywhere. Antipas saw the soldiers guarding him and, from the shock, fell ill. He approached Herod. When Herod saw him, he covered his face. "You cursed one, get away from me. Tomorrow, you will approach me with Emperor Augustus Caesar's messengers who will come with you. You will explain your reason," and he dismissed him.

The next day, he gathered all the army commanders and officials. He also had Emperor Augustus Caesar's messengers participate in the assembly. He ordered everyone who knew about the plot to kill him to reveal it to the assembly. They all detailed and spoke about everything Antipas had planned to kill Herod. The messenger who came with Antipas asked, "This is a pretense of weeping to kill me. Now if I spare him, he will not spare the children of his brothers and me." He spoke much and then fell silent.

At this time, before he spoke, Antipas, pretending to have a headache, fell down weeping and said, "Father, I have committed a mistake, so forgive me." The people begged him to forgive him, but Herod rebuked the people and told them to be silent. They were silent. Herod said, "A person who knows Antipas's character will not forgive him." He then stood up and said, "My father, I have fulfilled all your commands. You alone have left everything and

forgiven me. There is no greater sin than preparing to kill you. You have done everything for me. You have made me king and raised me up."

You also introduced me to Emperor Augustus Caesar, and I appointed him to a high position of authority. He rejoiced when I killed them, and he was next in line to me. When I went to him, he honored me greatly, more than any other king. He took the kingdom for himself. I killed my children and made him happy. Now I am exposed to deep sorrow. While I mourn, he has been laughing. The money given to him was also more than to others.

I am greatly saddened when I see the wives of my children helpless. I cannot bring back my dead children. It is because I am cursed that God allowed it. He could have waited until God killed me. But he hastened and prepared to kill me as well. I am close to death, but he rushed me. He wanted to kill me and take the kingship for himself. He should not have asked for it. He deceived me and led me to kill my own innocent children with his cunning.

He knew that if they were alive, he would not reign, so he had them killed. I committed sin upon sin. I killed them to please him. My brothers who were killed received their just punishment. You anticipated them when they were preparing to kill you. And you exposed me before I could anticipate you. Even today, your kindness has not ended. My brothers whom you killed were preparing to kill both you and me. I tried to turn Siloam against you and plot against you with Emperor Augustus Caesar, but I made his treachery futile. You know Siloam's cruelty. I found him waiting to kill you, brought him to you, and had him killed. If I had wanted to kill you, I would not have brought him to you. My mistake was going to Rome, separating myself from you. Because I was not there, or in my absence, my enemies plotted

against me. If I had been there, this enemy conspiracy against me would not have reached you. I went to Rome at your command. I went to fulfill your command. I also made sure that Emperor Augustus did not change his good opinion of you, after he had started to honor and trust you.

Emperor Augustus Caesar himself is my witness for this. If you ask him, he will tell you the truth. If I had intended evil against you, God would not have tolerated me. He would have destroyed me, for God does not tolerate evil people; He destroys them and pays them their due. When Absalom was preparing to kill his father David, God destroyed him until his roots were uprooted. If he had been caught and brought to his father's hand, he would not have died.

But I reached you without being killed on the way. If I had wanted to flee, I would have fled from where I was. The place was convenient and spacious for fleeing. When Absalom fled, David sent his messengers to bring him back alive, not to kill him. My enemies have told you many things about me, but you should take your time and truly understand the matter. If you don't want to, then kill me with your own hand; don't give me to another killer. This treacherous and deceitful Antipas, after all this rambling and babbling, cried bitterly like a truthful person. Others who saw his weeping also cried. However, Herod's chief secretary, Nephilo, who loved Alexander and Aristobulus, whom Antipas had unjustly killed, and knew that they had been killed due to Antipas's treachery, said, "Do not believe Antipas's words as truth. He is a sorcerer and an evil person who had his brothers killed. In addition to his brothers, he has killed many innocent people. And now, it has been confirmed that he was caught plotting with Pheroras to kill his father."

"But you saw him weeping deceptively and you wept. Why did you not weep for his two brothers whom he had killed? They were killed unjustly. You should weep for your king, for your lives, and for your children. If Antipas remains alive, he will not let anyone live; he will destroy everyone," said Nephilo, greatly agitated. He detailed Antipas's cruelty. Since Emperor Augustus Caesar's envoy was present, Herod gave the envoy an opportunity, saying, "You ask him if he has anything to say." The envoy said, "I have nothing to ask."

Herod ordered that the poison found in his brother Pheroras's house, prepared by Antipas to kill Herod, be given to one of those who had been caught trying to kill Herod. They gave him the poison, and he immediately died. Herod ordered that the vial that had contained the poison be sealed and sent to Emperor Augustus Caesar through the envoy. Herod then had Antipas imprisoned. Herod entrusted the envoy to explain the matter to Emperor Augustus Caesar.

Herod became ill, and his illness worsened day by day. Due to the distress of his illness, he longed for death and wanted to end his own life. He ordered his servants to bring him a gourd, and they brought it to him. He said, "Give me a knife to peel the gourd." They gave it to him, and he tried to cut open his stomach with the knife. But his servants quickly seized his hand. At this moment, he wept bitterly, and they wept with him.

Their weeping was heard outside the palace. The news spread throughout the city that the king had died. Antipas was greatly pleased when he heard of his father's death and asked the prison guard to release him. The prison guard, however, said, "I will not release you until I confirm the king's death," and he went to the palace to verify the news. Herod was found alive. The guard told

Herod, "Antipas was greatly pleased to hear of your death." Herod immediately ordered, "Kill Antipas at once, and erase his name from every honorable record."

Antipas was killed while still in prison on that same day. After Herod, his hand, Archelaus, was ordered to reign. After having Antipas killed, Herod died. Herod died five days after Antipas's death. Herod was seventy years old, and his reign was thirty-seven years.

When Herod was near death, he entrusted Archelaus, who was to succeed him, to kill all the people who were in prison. However, when Archelaus saw Herod's death, he released all the prisoners.

He treated all those he released from prison well. Nephilo (Herod's secretary) explained in writing that Herod had issued an order to kill them, but Archelaus had shown them mercy. The people greatly loved him for mercifully releasing the prisoners.

They buried Herod in the tomb he had prepared earlier.

Herod's body was carried on a golden bed. Various silk and brocade ornaments were placed on it. The golden scepter he held during his life was placed in his corpse's hand. His children were made to walk in front of him. The Jewish leaders were with them. The soldiers and servants followed behind. The soldiers carried their weapons as if they were lining up for battle. Fifty officials surrounding his corpse carried types of perfumes called "musk, amber, and camphor" and other types of perfumes. They would spray the perfume on the people. They did this not because they loved Herod from their hearts, but out of fear, because his tyranny, his oppressive rule, and his extreme cruelty were ingrained in their hearts.

After Archelaus came to power, he was called Herod II, after his father Herod I. The people who had been oppressed by Herod I

expressed their hatred for the deceased Herod, openly declaring in every public place that he was a repulsive fascist and a merciless tyrant. They analyzed all the injustices he had committed, from beginning to end. They also feared that his son Archelaus would follow in his footsteps. "We will not be governed by your kingdom; you should not reign, for you are the son of a barbarian," they cried out boldly even before his enthronement.

Archelaus, in response, killed the defiant opponents.

At this time, selected Jews went to Rome to Emperor Augustus Caesar and accused Archelaus, saying, "The barbarian Herod not only killed people but also committed many barbaric acts against us. We would have been glad if he died. His son Archelaus, without your permission, has started to reign and kill his opponents; he has killed many. If this is the case, he should have asked for your permission instead of proclaiming himself king. But he did not do this." They earnestly begged him not to let Archelaus reign over them. They also begged Emperor Augustus Caesar to appoint a Roman, not a Jew, from among his followers to rule over them.

Archelaus, for his part, went to Rome with his father's secretary, Nephilo, to Emperor Augustus Caesar. Nephilo heard the Jews' complaint and said to Emperor Augustus Caesar, "These Jews who have come to accuse Archelaus do not hate Archelaus ruling over them because he is their relative, but because they want to betray the Roman government." Many efforts were made among the subordinate officials of Caesar to confirm Archelaus's kingship, and they acknowledged his kingship.

Archelaus returned to his country, gaining more acceptance than his accusers. Emperor Augustus Caesar confirmed his kingship and sent him. He ruled the Jews with undisputed authority,

oppressing them as he pleased and causing them much suffering.

He married his brother Alexander's wife. The night this woman was taken to Archelaus, she saw her husband Alexander angry in her dream. When she tried to approach him, he moved away from her. "Marriage after me will not benefit you. Know that you have brought shame and disgrace upon me," he threatened her greatly.

She awoke from her sleep in shock and told people the dream she had seen. She died on the second day after Archelaus took her. Archelaus, for his part, saw in his dream very beautiful clusters of perfume from a tree trunk. A large bull came and ate the perfumes. He told this to dream interpreters. The dream interpreters said, "The seven clusters of perfume are seven years.

You will reign for seven years. The large bull that ate the seven clusters of perfume is Caesar. After seven years, Caesar will take your kingdom, and in that same year, you will be removed from your kingdom." A few years later, one of Emperor Augustus Caesar's high officials came to the Temple, seized Archelaus, and imprisoned him. He then took him to Rome. He died in prison.

After him, his brother Antipas reigned.

It was Emperor Augustus Caesar who crowned Antipas.

Archelaus was imprisoned and taken to Rome, where he died. Emperor Augustus Caesar crowned Antipas and spoke to him as his father Herod. Antipas became an evil ruler like his father and his brother Archelaus. He also became an adulterer. He took his brother Philip's wife, Herodias, while Philip was still alive. When the great Jewish people opposed him for taking his brother's wife, he killed them. Many were killed for this reason. He also killed John, the son of the priest Zechariah, because John rebuked him, saying, "You should not take your brother's wife while he is alive."

Antipas had two children with Philip's wife.

It was John who taught baptism to the Jews. The Jews called John "Yihya," and Christians called him John. During the reign of Herod's son Antipas, Emperor Augustus Caesar died, and Emperor Tiberius reigned. Much evil was seen during this time. Emperor Tiberius became an evil king. He ordered people to bow down to him and worship him. When the Jews refused, saying, "We will not bow down to you," he killed many Jews. The Jews, uniting in rebellion, expelled Antipas from the palace. Knowing that they hated him, Emperor Tiberius imprisoned him in a place called Andlos, where he died. Antipas reigned over the Jews as Herod III for about a year. After him, his brother Aristobulus's son Agrippa reigned.

During the reign of Agrippa, son of Aristobulus, Emperor Tiberius died, and Nero Caesar reigned in his place. No evil Caesar had reigned before him like him. He was a ruthless Caesar. He ordered all people to call him God and to swear by his name. He decided that temples for his worship should be built throughout his dominion. He said that offerings must be made in his name in every temple.

All the Gentiles followed his command. Only the Jews said, "We will not accept your command." The Jews sent a man named Philo to him. Philo was intelligent and clever. Nero Caesar asked Philo, "Why do you say you will not obey me?" Philo, for his part, replied, "We call God our God, and we do not call a human being God. We swear only by the name of God. We build temples only for God and offer sacrifices to Him. We will not deviate from the command of our God."

Nero was greatly angered (at Philo). Philo had taken many Jewish messengers with him, but only he was allowed to approach Nero. He told the Jews waiting outside about the torrent of insults he

had received from Nero. "Now he is about to unleash his wrath upon us. Let us pray to God with fasting and prayer. Let us implore Him to deliver us from this impending tribulation," he told them. Messengers were sent to all the Jews throughout Rome to pray to God with weeping, fasting, and prayer from wherever they were. They prayed for three days and three nights, imploring God to deliver them from the hands of Emperor Nero.

On the third day, the Jews rallied the people of Rome and rose up, surrounding Emperor Nero. They cut off his head with a sword and dismembered his body, scattering it. Because they threw the pieces of his body into the field, dogs ate it. He was not buried in a tomb, for God had shown His wrath upon him. After him, Emperor Claudius reigned and allowed Philo to return to his country in peace. Philo and his followers returned to the Temple rejoicing. Emperor Claudius ordered that all the idol temples that had been built for Emperor Nero's worship be demolished.

The Jewish king Agrippa also reigned with good leadership. He continued to honor and obey Emperor Claudius. For three years...

During this time, this Nero was Nero II. The Nero who killed the apostles Peter and Paul is said to be the son of Claudius. In the thirteenth year of Nero's reign, John the Evangelist wrote his Gospel. At this time, it had been 44 years since our Savior Jesus Christ ascended. The first Agrippa was called a barbarian Herod, like his grandfather. It was Agrippa II, who was appointed, who had John's brother James killed. Saint Paul was also accused and stood before this Agrippa II.

Eleazar was the first to say, "We do not know." In addition to being a priest named Ananias, he was also a rebel. He was one of the strong and rebellious leaders who said, "We will not submit to the Roman government." They became the reasons for the

destruction of the Temple. Many people were also destroyed. It is said that Eleazar also had a son. Eleazar was a strong man. He gathered many rebels. Many evil people also gathered around him and went to Armenia. They would break into the houses of the wealthy and steal their property.

When they found travelers, they would rob them. When they robbed, they did not distinguish between rich and poor; they robbed everyone they found. While doing this, they would return to their country. As they went back and forth, they plundered Armenia. The Armenians, oppressed by the robbery of their Jewish brethren, complained to the Roman governor, Felix. Felix cunningly seized Eleazar and took him to Rome in chains. He killed Eleazar's followers. Eleazar, however, was imprisoned in Rome for a short time and then released. He returned to the Temple. Agrippa, for his part, went to Rome, wanting to meet Nero. When Agrippa left the Temple and began his journey, a serious quarrel broke out between the Romans and the Jews. The cause of the quarrel was that Felix, the Roman official, had committed many injustices against the Jews. However, the Jews formed a united front and defeated Felix. As he fled, defeated, many Romans around the Temple were killed. The remaining Romans were driven out of the Temple. Felix fled to Egypt. When Agrippa was preparing to travel to Rome by ship, Felix reached him and ordered him to stop his journey to Rome and return to the Temple.

When Agrippa set out to return to the Temple, Felix explained to Agrippa everything that had happened at the Temple, including Eleazar's actions. Agrippa had many high-ranking Roman soldiers with him. When he returned to the Temple, the Jews welcomed him with joy. Agrippa asked them what had caused the conflict

with Felix. They explained the injustices committed against them and said, "From today onwards, we will not submit to the Romans." At this, Agrippa was saddened and greatly troubled, being confused. He understood that rebelling against Roman rule would not be beneficial and that the Romans could destroy them. Agrippa consoled the Roman military officials who were with him so that they would not lose hope. He also gathered the Jews according to their ranks, because if he gathered them all together, they had shed much blood with the Romans and could not be calmed down. But if he gathered them separately, he addressed them clearly, saying, "My brothers, listen to me calmly and quietly. If you do not listen to me, you will make my words futile, and you will make me forget what I intended to say. And you will not hear what is said.

"Listening attentively leads to good understanding. One who listens attentively can ask questions and receive answers." When they heard Agrippa's words, they stopped murmuring and began to listen in silence. He continued, "Truly, I understand the injustice you have suffered from the Romans. What has led you to say this is not your desire but the oppression you have endured and the injustice committed against you. It is not that you have arisen from somewhere else. The Romans, seeing that I was separated from you for a short time, inflicted suffering upon you. This act has greatly saddened me. Nevertheless, you and I have no power to escape from their hands. God has allowed them to rule over all Gentiles, including us, to the extent that it is impossible for people to live in a country due to their vast numbers. All the countries in the sea, in the East and in the West, are ruled by them. We are few. They will come and destroy you. Do not think that your fortresses and walls will save you. All who fortified their cities

more than our walls and fortresses did not escape the hands of the Romans. Their walls and fortresses did not save them. Instead, they were exposed to greater suffering; they were killed and captured.

"Nero Caesar inflicted suffering upon you without his knowledge. Nero does not want you to suffer. If he knows this, he will punish him. And in the future, I will ask Caesar not to repeat this and to send us another good and compassionate person. I will explain all the injustices he has committed against you in writing.

"From now on, the Roman official who should be sent to you must be someone who does not love money, does not oppress people, and removes evil. I will ask Caesar for this. And you, in order to be saved from destruction, humbly accept the coming agent of Caesar. If you do this, your lives will be protected, your property will not be plundered, and your former glory will be preserved.

Even now, do not provoke the Romans who are with us. Wait patiently until a letter from Nero Caesar arrives with a reply. Do not rush into something whose outcome you do not know. Haste leads to suffering. This is my advice.

"If you understand what I am telling you, you must prepare for good things. I will strive to protect your well-being. If you listen to me and follow me, we can all live in peace. But if you refuse to accept my advice and cease your obedience to the Roman government, know that I will not cooperate with you. I will not cooperate with you. For the sake of your children, your wives, and your lives, fear God. Save this great country and the Temple from destruction. Do not raise opposition in things you cannot achieve. Do not gain hatred. I know there are men among you who love to destroy. I know there are those who enjoy seeing this country destroyed.

"If you give support to such instigators, they will bring suffering upon you, but they will never bring you any benefit. They do not want people to live in peace. They enjoy seeing chaos and suffering. Following their wickedness, the Romans may come to destroy you. At that time, an unexpected danger will block your path. At this time, your enemies will rejoice and gain advantage over you."

Agrippa remained deeply saddened as he explained all this. The priest named Ananias also wept. Many did not accept Agrippa's advice. They openly expressed their non-acceptance of the Roman government and mocked Agrippa. Nero Caesar of Rome, for his part, had previously given offerings to the Temple. Many Roman kings before him had made it a custom to give to the House of God, and they continued this. Ananias's son, Eleazar, placed this gift from Nero Caesar, which was sent to the House of God, outside the Temple, saying that a gift from Gentile kings should not enter the House of God. When Agrippa returned from Egypt, he killed the great Roman army commanders who had come with him. He also massacred all the other Romans who were found in the Temple. Agrippa was unaware of all this. This was because all this killing happened when he was far from the Temple with his army. The Romans who survived went to Eleazar and told him about the killing that had happened to their people. Agrippa sent his military commanders and three thousand other men outside the city to attack the Jews. These warriors sent by Herod engaged in battle with the group led by Eleazar. They fought for seven days, and Eleazar and his followers were defeated. Many of his followers were killed. He fled to the Holy Temple, and they pursued him to the Temple, where a fierce battle ensued. During this time, the men Eleazar had trained during his

time as a rebel, disguised as peaceful citizens, approached and killed many people. Since they did not carry weapons openly, they killed Herod's unsuspecting followers.

Again, Agrippa's men were forced to flee due to a heavy attack on a path they had been informed about. Eleazar's group resurged, took control of the Temple by themselves, and declared, "We are the rulers." They plundered the king's and his son's houses, and they looted all the royal treasuries and property. On another note, Jews living in Armenia clashed with the local residents.

Armenians are known for spreading anti-Jewish sentiment to other countries.

During this era, many Armenians lived in Damascus, especially in a seaport near Damascus. These Armenians cunningly incited the populace, causing many Jews to be massacred in Damascus and Caesarea. When Jews living in various regions heard of Eleazar's rise in the Temple, they gathered and went to Damascus. Some went to Armenia, killed any Armenian they found, and returned with much plunder. Upon their return, they besieged a place called "Sikil" in the Armenian province. They sent word to the Jewish residents of that city, telling them to leave the city. They also warned them to prepare to go to Ananias, or else the Armenians might kill them.

However, these Jewish residents of Sikil were unwilling to leave or go; moreover, they responded with insults and abuses. These Jews supported the Armenians living with them and fought against their fellow Jews. The Jews who had gathered from various countries and invaded Armenia were forced to leave the region because the battle in the city of Sikil became too intense for them. After a short while, the Armenians feared these Jews who lived among them and conspired to kill them. However, since

it was difficult for them to kill the Jews outright, they devised another method. By this other method, they made them go to an empty place and then killed them there. A great many Jews were killed there. Among these Jews was a man named Simon, son of Saul. This man was admired for his stature, strength, and bravery.

This was the man who, when the residents of Sikil surrounded Armenia and prepared for battle, supported the Armenians in fighting and caused the Jews to flee, killing many of them.

When the Armenians cunningly lured the people to a deserted place, Simon, suspecting their intentions, took his family and secretly carried his weapons when he left. When the Armenians killed the women and approached him, Simon, in an unsuspecting manner, drew his sword and, to their astonishment, cut down and defeated many of them. However, being surrounded by both Romans and Armenians, he was overcome. At this moment, he said, "I am not here to fight. I saved you by fighting and killing, but you, my own people, are committing such a massacre against other members of your own kind, the Armenians, who did not commit such a massacre."

"Therefore, since I have done good for you, is it truly God's will for you to kill me? Is this the justice of the Most High God? For your sake, I have killed my brothers and my brothers' children. I should not have done this, but rather than die by your hands, I will kill myself and await judgment from God. I do not want you to boast about killing me. And I will be judged for shedding the blood of my brothers by pleasing you."

Simon said this and moved. Those who surrounded him, seeing his movement, stepped back. No Armenian dared to approach him. Simon then went to his house and cut off his own father's head. Next, he killed his mother. Then he massacred his wife and

children with a sword, destroying them. He then destroyed his other relatives, one by one. He gathered all their bodies together, climbed on top of them, and killed himself with the sword he held. When Agrippa understood that Eleazar was stirring up the Jewish people against Rome, Agrippa went to Rome. When he realized that Eleazar had conquered the Romans, including high-ranking Roman officials, in the Holy Land and had taken control of Judea,

Agrippa approached Emperor Nero very closely. He ordered Gesius, the commander of his army, to go with Agrippa to the Holy Land and subdue the Jews. Gesius had previously gone to Persia and subdued the Persians. He returned to Armenia from where he was. He heard what Eleazar, son of Ananias, the priest, had done, and he became very angry. Agrippa and Gesius met in Armenia, and Agrippa went with him to Judea. He told him that he had ordered him to subdue the Jews. Gesius was looking for a reason to take revenge on the Jews.

He marched his army with Agrippa to Judea and killed the Jews. He killed whoever he found among the Jews until he reached the Temple. This Gesius fought the final battle with Eleazar, son of Ananias the priest, and defeated Eleazar and his followers. As usual, Eleazar fled and entered the Temple. Agrippa and Gesius followed him, surrounded the Temple, and waited for three days. They sent a messenger to Eleazar, saying, "Let us make peace." But Eleazar refused and killed the messenger who was sent to him.

On the fourth day after Eleazar entered the Temple, he gathered the priests and others, slipped out of the Temple, launched an attack, and killed many Romans. Thousands of Romans were unexpectedly massacred. Seeing this attack and movement by Eleazar, the Roman Gesius was shocked and moved away from

the Jewish city. The danger posed by the Jews became greater than he had anticipated. As night fell, he ordered his followers to set fires everywhere and blow trumpets. The number of men assigned to this task was forty. The reason he did this was to make the Jews aware of the presence of his army.

On the following night, Gesius and Agrippa marched their entire army to Caesarea. Eleazar also marched to Caesarea, following their footsteps. There, he engaged in battle and defeated them. Many Roman soldiers were killed. Gesius's flight was reported to Emperor Nero. Nero was greatly enraged by this. Soon after, he heard that the Persians had also rebelled against him. Emperor Nero's frustration doubled.

The loyal Vespasian had already gone to the West. He had gone to subdue the country ruled by Antipas's son. He went, subdued it, and returned. The reason for his return was that he heard of the rebellion of the Jews and Persians. As soon as he arrived, he ordered his son Titus to destroy the Persians and Jews and devastate their land. He set out from Rome, and Agrippa also joined him.

When Vespasian, Agrippa, and Antiochus arrived in Antioch, they found the Jews prepared for battle. They divided their forces into three and assigned them to lead the battle in three directions. Among the three priests, one was Joseph, son of Coryon, and the remaining priests were Ananias and Eleazar, son of Ananias.

They also assigned their positions strategically. When the two priests were assigned to await the coming enemy in Tiberias and Galilee, the middle position was assigned to Joseph, son of Coryon. There were those they had forgotten and left behind in their places. The remaining priests were assigned to guard all the land from Judea to the border of Egypt.

When the Jews divided themselves to protect their land, Joseph, son of Coryon, built a battlefield, fortress, and stronghold in the place where he was assigned. Ananias, the great priest and father of Eleazar, added height to the Temple wall and stationed soldiers with weapons at every fortress.

Vespasian and his army set out from Antioch and entered Armenia, where they spent the night. He decided to begin the first battle in Tiberias. He started the battle, and the battle intensified against him. However, he ordered his army to fight fiercely.

Joseph, son of Coryon, assigned his soldiers to leaders of a thousand, fifty, and ten. When he advised them, he said, "Fear God, not the enemy, for God is almighty and helps you. He will help you to win. Therefore, do not fear death. Worse than death is falling into the hands of the enemy, enslaving your children, and living in humiliation.

"Death comes by God's command. For your faith, for your children, for the joy you will have, and for the freedom you will have after victory, only think of these things. Give your lives for the struggle, then you will go to light. A greater reward awaits you, which is eternal," he told them.

When the people of God heard Joseph's words, their hearts were strengthened, and they prepared to fight their enemy. Joseph assigned seven thousand soldiers to lead the army and ordered the rest to return to their homes. Agrippa approached the city wall he had built. This place was called Tyria. Agrippa also took the property he had stored there. Agrippa also took the weapons he had collected. It was reported that the people of Tyria supported the Romans, not him. He understood that they had chosen to fight with the Romans and sat down.

When Joseph asked them why they betrayed him and supported the Romans, some evil people said, "We did this, not all of us.

Although we knew that people were assigned to support Vespasian, we remained silent out of fear for our lives." Later, they opened their city and welcomed him. Joseph searched for the evil people who had gone to give support to the Romans and killed them. He also killed the man sent by Vespasian. He found those who had betrayed the people of Aforia and Galilee and killed some of them and imprisoned others. All who sided with Rome were killed.

Vespasian heard what Joseph, son of Coryon, had done and was greatly angered. He marched towards him. Agrippa, for his part, lined up his soldiers in front and waited for him. Vespasian and Agrippa lined up together. The army led by the two was not only from Rome but also recruited many soldiers from many Gentile nations. All the Gentiles who hated the Jews and lived among them eagerly rose up to destroy the Jews on their own accord.

Hyrkanos did not cooperate with the Romans to destroy the Temple based on the Jewish faith. However, the Edomites, numbering sixty thousand, came beforehand and guarded the perimeter of the Temple. They also rose up, armed, to help the Jews.

When Vespasian came directly to take control of Tiberias and Galilee, Joseph, son of Coryon, was greatly afraid when he saw the large number of Roman soldiers. He went and approached a place called "Budaqeb." Vespasian sent a message to Joseph, son of Coryon, saying, "Come to me so that there may be peace between us, and let us have a covenant of peace." But Joseph, son of Coryon, did not come, saying that he did not trust him. Again, he gave the response, "Give me time to consult with the

people of the Temple." Vespasian agreed to this, lifted the siege, and moved back.

Joseph, son of Coryon, sent messengers to the people of the Temple and asked them what answer they had to Vespasian's peace proposal. But they replied, "We will not surrender to the Romans. We will continue our struggle to see our fate, whether to win or to lose, until the end. We will either defeat them, or they will uproot us. But until then, our struggle will continue." When Vespasian heard the answer given to Joseph, son of Coryon, by the people of the Temple, he brought back the army he had moved back from the siege of Tiberias and Galilee and attacked the place they had occupied.

Joseph, son of Coryon, returned and engaged in battle with Vespasian. The number of soldiers between them grew daily without stopping. The Jews, for their part, began to engage in hand-to-hand combat without fearing death, saying, "We give our lives to God." As Roman soldiers poured in from all directions, overwhelming the entire land, the Jews, however, continued to diminish and flee.

Since the Jews had no help, they became very weak and confined themselves to the Temple courtyard. Vespasian besieged them for many days, cutting off their water supply and leaving them thirsty. They were about to perish from thirst. Vespasian had the Temple wall breached with heavy iron spears.

The Jews came out through every opening and engaged in a fierce struggle with the Romans, and most of them perished. However, they fought a desperate battle without caring for their lives, and the Roman soldiers who had surrounded them were shocked. They tried to flee. But Vespasian encouraged them not to flee. As a result, many soldiers fell on both sides. Especially

since most of the Jews had perished, very few Jews remained with Joseph, son of Coryon.

The Jews, being in great distress, returned to the Temple courtyard and closed its gates. The war continued for forty-eight days without interruption. All the Jews who fought in this war perished. Finally, the Romans entered the Temple and massacred the remaining Jews. Joseph, son of Coryon, with forty Jews from the entire Jewish army, survived by fleeing.

Joseph, son of Coryon, with the forty Jews, went to the wilderness and hid in a cave. When Vespasian heard that Joseph, son of Coryon, was hiding in a cave, he sent a message to him, saying, "Come out, let there be peace between us, and let us have a covenant of peace." Joseph, son of Coryon, was willing to accept the offer. But the Jews with him said, "Vespasian has called you not for peace, but to boast after he gets you in his hands, saying, 'I have captured the chief priest of the Jews.' This is death for the Jews."

"Therefore, it is better if you die upholding the honor of the Jews.

Handing over the honor of the Jews to the pagan Romans is worse than any death. Do not give your hand to them and make the Jews a boast for the Romans. The Jews who defied the Romans and died with honor are honorable. Neither we nor you should seek comfort in the world, separated from them. We will not allow them to take us into their hands by pretending to be Romans and kill us in humiliation. If you are humiliated, then being killed by their sword again is not only humiliation for you but humiliation for all Jews.

"You should not die defiling and disgracing your faith. Moses, rather than see the destruction of his people, begged God for death. When he saw the death of his people, he begged God to

kill him. David begged God to kill him and his family instead of his people. He also begged God to remove the weakness from his people. Saul and Jonathan, because they hated falling into the hands of the enemy, killed themselves.

"How did you choose to remain alive after all these Jewish people were annihilated? You are not like the prophets. You are not like the kings. Our prophets and kings chose death over falling into the hands of the enemy. They did not wish to live after their people. If you surrender to the enemy, where is your faith? Where is your conduct? Where is your knowledge? Where is your teaching? In the Law of Moses, why do you not obey the word of God? 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' Let us give our souls for His command, and let us die for our faith. Did you not yourself say, 'Fight the enemy without fearing death'? One who says this and hides himself from death is considered a sorcerer. By dying for faith, eternal light is found. This is how we fight the enemy until the end. How did you wish for life when you are at the brink of death? Why did you not stop when the blood of your people was flowing? The blood of the Jews has flowed because of your command. How can you wish to live after having them killed? During the war, you were pushing them forward, saying, 'Do not turn back!' Did you not promise, 'I, Joseph, son of Coryon, have given my soul to the Most High God. As a commander of an army, I will fight the Romans. I will strengthen the faith of God through victory'? Where is your honor and your piety before God? You know God's command. Did you not say, 'I am not afraid to die for God's command'? But now you appear to be afraid of death. Therefore, it is better for you to die with honor. Do not surrender your life to the Romans.

"Warriors are feared, and your reputation is admired. If you surrender to the Romans, you will establish futility over the Jews." After these forty men rained down a torrent of accusations, they raised their swords, saying, "Rather than have the Romans kill you disgracefully, let us kill you." At this, Joseph, son of Coryon, said, "What you said about dying is correct, but God has not commanded me to take my own life while I am still alive. It is not God's will for anyone to take their own life. Our souls live by God's providence. He created us, clothed us with flesh, and He will take us when He wills. When God takes us, we have no power to resist.

"We must not break God's command. If we take our own lives, we have denied God and destroyed our faith. When their suffering intensified in the end, the righteous and prophets did not kill themselves. They endured, waiting for God's judgment. Killing oneself is betrayal and sin. However, surrendering one's life to death has been given to us. Fighting the enemy and being killed for one's faith is permitted.

"It is not commendable—with kindness—for a person to take their own life. It is not allowed by faith. One who takes their own life has mental weakness and lacks understanding. Even animals fear death. They struggle to avoid dying as long as they can. A sailor tries hard to escape drowning. A king advises his soldiers to fight bravely but does not advise them to kill themselves.

Therefore, if we take our own lives, we will be like servants who force open the gate and enter their master's house without being called."

"You praised Saul for taking his own life, but they say he defied God. If I had not been among my people, I would not have been chosen to fight the Romans. Since my mind is sound, I could have

chosen not to, or I could have served them like Herod. Before this war began, Vespasian honored me and told me to come to him. But I went not by the will of the Romans but by the will of God. If I succeeded, I fought the war believing in God to win. If I did not succeed, my intention was to defeat the Romans. During the war, if I were to be killed, it would be God's will. It is better if we strive to expel the Romans than to be destroyed, and the Law of Israel to be destroyed, and the Temple to be destroyed."

"Neither I nor you can change God's will. If God had willed it, He would have made us safe. But because of our wickedness, God has handed us over to the enemy. We are paying the price for our destruction. There has been no time when we rested from fighting the enemy. We fought until they took our place.

"But we do not have the power to take our own lives. If we kill ourselves, there will be no problem for our enemies, and there will be no benefit for our people. We will not gain fame this way. The

Romans have called us to show us mercy. Let us use this opportunity to save our people from destruction. If their goal is to deceive and kill us, and if God wants to help us this way, let us not refuse the opportunity," he said in response. Then Joseph, son of Coryon, raised his hand to heaven and said, "You, O God, are great. You created us in Your power. You cast us into this tribulation and distress. You did this to us because of our errors.

"Take our souls to Yourself in the way You desire. Do not give us over to kill ourselves. Do not bring upon us the destruction that awaits murderers. You are the one who governs our souls. You are the one who created souls. Our souls are Yours and will return to You. They will return to You after we die. You are praised in all Your works."

Joseph, son of Coryon's reprimand did not sit well with those forty Jews. Instead, they hastened to take their own lives. They rose up to kill him as well. When Joseph, son of Coryon, understood their situation, he sought a way to save his life. He said, "If you are determined to kill me and to kill yourselves, let us cast lots to see who should kill." They accepted Joseph's proposal. They killed each other, and all forty perished. Joseph, however, remained unharmed, and one man survived with him.

At this time, that man said to Joseph, "Our people have been killing each other in pairs. Do you want to do the same?" Joseph replied, "What benefit do we gain from killing each other? If I kill you, God will hold me accountable for your blood. If you kill me, it will be the same. For this reason, we will lose this world in vain and also lose the next world. Therefore, I will not allow you to kill me." At this, the man was frightened and left Joseph, son of Coryon.

Joseph went alone to Vespasian and surrendered. Vespasian welcomed him well and treated him with honor. People from the Jewish side began to urge Vespasian to kill Joseph, son of Coryon. But he did not accept their urging. Due to their persistent urging, although he did not kill him, he imprisoned him. He then ordered his son Titus to inspect the area around the Temple. He also ordered him to do the same around Galilee. Titus, at this time, killed everyone he suspected of saying, "We will not submit to the Romans." He did not kill those whose loyalty he had confirmed.

In Galilee, there was a nation called Qusala. In this nation, there was a man named Hanan. Hanan was insightful, knowledgeable, and wise. On the other hand, this man was arrogant and did forbidden acts. Bad people gathered around him. He would

organize these bad people, kill people, and plunder their property.

Through this, he amassed much wealth.

When the Romans took control of the area, this Hanan fled with his accomplices to the Temple. All Jews who had been involved in robbery and other illegal activities fled from wherever they were and came to the Temple. They joined Hanan. When Hanan had many followers, he committed many acts of rebellion around the Temple. He plundered the property of the wealthy people around the Temple and distributed it to his followers, the bandits. Even priests had their property plundered by Hanan.

Not content with this, Hanan began to depose priests from their priesthood and give them other titles. He even deposed the chief priest from his priesthood and gave his authority to an outsider who knew nothing of the priestly conduct. The people's criticism of him greatly increased, but he would persuade people to support him in his wicked ways. However, they told him, "We will not cooperate with you in your illegal actions," and they killed him.

This evil act greatly disgusted the people. Many Jews eagerly wished for the Romans to come and free them from this wicked man.

When these followers of Hanan heard of Vespasian's arrival, they had already entered a place called "Bati'barda" in the Jordan.

When they heard of Vespasian's arrival, they fled into the forest and remained there.

When Vespasian heard that they had fled into the forest, he sent his troops after them. The dispatched troops found Hanan's followers hidden and entered their hiding place. They launched an attack, killing most of them, while the rest fled to various places.

As these Vespasian soldiers returned, they encountered Jews coming to the Temple and killed them. One hundred thousand

three hundred Jews were killed in this way. The remaining Jews, who were on the verge of death, were thrown into the Jordan River. Many Jews perished in this way.

Vespasian then headed to Rome and reached a place called "Dagd." He then reached Sebaste and ordered the city wall he had previously demolished to be rebuilt. He also prepared to march on the Temple. He reached Caesarea and gathered a large army. The war that had erupted around the Temple had not ceased. Hanan was tirelessly killing people, taking women captive, and plundering property.

While Hanan and Vespasian were individually destroying the Temple and the Jews, a man named Simon arose. This Simon was a particularly barbaric man. Following Hanan's path, he began to massacre the Jews. Ananias, the priest, drove this wicked man out of the country. However, wherever he went, he gathered similar bandits. Two hundred thousand bandits gathered around him.

The people of the Temple heard the situation and sent soldiers to where he was. However, he killed most of them and drove away the rest. He returned to the Temple and burned the harvest of the Jewish people. He sent his wife, who was in the Holy Land, out of the country. Hanan prepared to fight Simon, but when he realized he could not defeat him, he turned in another direction. When Simon's wife, accompanied by her male and female servants, began her journey to reach her husband, Hanan brought her back from the road and made her stay in his house in the Holy Land.

When Simon heard of Hanan's action, he cut off the hands of Hanan's family members and sent them to Hanan, saying, "If you do not send my wife, I will bring her to the Temple victoriously and cut off the hands of all the residents in the same way." At this, the

residents of the Holy Land were greatly alarmed. Hanan quickly sent his wife to him and stopped destroying the Holy Land for the time being. The residents gained a short respite.

Simon went to Edom and pursued its residents, plundering their property. After doing this, he came to the Holy Land from where he was. The Holy Land was disturbed and lost its peace through Hanan and Simon. Outside the country, Simon would kill any Jew he found and plunder their property. Inside the country, Hanan would massacre people and plunder property. The Holy Land was in distress both internally and externally.

When the residents of the Temple were in distress, they sent to Simon to remove Hanan for them, as their anxiety and slaughter had increased. Simon told them, "If I remove Hanan, promise me that you will obey me, and I will promise not to do evil." They promised him according to what he said. He immediately entered the central country and engaged in war with Hanan. Hanan, however, could not be defeated by him. The war between the two ignited an incessant war among the people. He broke the covenant he had made and began to torture them. In the midst of this, Emperor Nero died. Vespasian was in Caesarea. When Vespasian heard of Emperor Nero's death and that the Romans had crowned a wicked man named Vitellius, Vespasian was greatly angered. When the Romans heard of his anger, they feared him and allowed him to reign wherever he was. Vespasian set out from Caesarea, intending to go to Rome to fight Vitellius. Before going to Rome, however, he gave half of his army to his son Titus and ordered Titus to remain in Caesarea. He then changed his mind again and sent his representative with a large army to Rome. He ordered his son Titus to fight the Jews.

While all this was happening, Joseph, son of Coryon, was living as a prisoner under Vespasian. At this time, Joseph, son of Coryon, was made Titus's advisor.

The soldiers Vespasian sent to Rome killed Vitellius. Upon hearing this, Vespasian quickly went to Rome to confirm his emperorship. His son Titus accompanied him as far as the port of Alexandria. He then returned to Caesarea and spent the winter there.

While all this was happening, Hanan and Simon, divided into two, were engaged in a fierce internal Jewish war. This war continued ceaselessly, winter and summer. Eleazar, son of Ananias the priest, for his part, had formed another faction and was waging his own war. Hanan, Eleazar, and Simon were savage rebels.

Again, new leaders arose from among the priests and governed the Holy Land. The internal wars worsened. Simon, acting as a tyrant, sat in a high place and declared himself ruler. In the lower part of the city, Hanan, with his own followers, became a second independent tyrant.

A bitter war erupted among the three tyrants and the priests. The blood of the dead flowed in the streets of the Holy Land. Human corpses piled up everywhere. There was no one to bury the dead.

Residents were afflicted by the stench of the corpses and the ensuing plague. The Jews, divided into three factions—those fighting internally and those living abroad—massacred each other in a manner difficult to describe. Priests, while claiming to offer sacrifices to God, were slaughtered. Their blood mixed with the blood of animals. The blood of the righteous mixed with the blood of the wicked.

The Temple was drenched in the blood of the dead and filled with their bodies. People were forced to walk over corpses, their feet

soaked in human blood. The blood congealed on their feet, making it impossible to clean. Due to the abundance of blood, people trying to move would slip and fall in the blood. Every living person wished for death due to the overpowering foul odor.

Eleazar and Simon showed a slight glimmer of compassion compared to Hanan. Hanan, however, was an absolute savage.

Eleazar used the area around the Temple as a stronghold. As

Eleazar, Hanan, and Simon, acting as individual leaders, massacred the people, their weapons were swords, daggers, and stones. They used stones with slingshots and by hand. Arson also became one of their primary activities. Strife, war, fire, and famine became the fate of the people.

Weeping, wailing, and lamentation became the daily lot of the people. The wailing and weeping of the people could be heard from afar. Children, youths, and elders were destined for weeping and wailing, for only suffering awaited them wherever they went. Wherever they went, only death awaited them, so they hated life and wished for death.

Titus, the son of Vespasian, was sent with the mission to destroy the Temple by his father, and he was greatly eager to reach his father in Rome after accomplishing his mission. So he set out from Caesarea and encamped at a place called Gaber. From there, he marched towards the Temple with seven hundred cavalrymen. As he marched, he announced that he had come to secure peace and tranquility for the people, resembling the destruction of the Temple's wall. When he arrived at the city, the city gates were closed, with no one entering or leaving, and a profound silence awaited him.

He found no one to ask why he had come. He returned to his army. As he returned to his camp, the Jews surrounded him and

tried to capture and imprison him. But he fought them without surrendering, and a fierce battle ensued. The next day, he returned to the Temple and made his army encamp on the Mount of Olives. Titus warned his soldiers not to separate. The following morning, the people of the Temple looked across and saw the Roman army. The leaders of the people gathered at this time, cast aside their mutual hatred, and said, "Let us defend ourselves against the Romans."

Forming a front, they engaged the Roman army in battle. Many soldiers from both the Jewish and Roman sides perished. In the end, however, the Jews were defeated and returned to their position in the Temple. Immediately, they decided to go out of the city and attack the Romans from behind. By attacking from both front and rear, the Jews encircled the Romans and annihilated many of them. Titus himself narrowly escaped from the hands of the Jews.

When the Jews witnessed the Romans' tendency to be defeated, a power struggle erupted among them. Hanan declared, "I must be the supreme authority in the future," breaking the covenant they had formed to fight the enemy. Simon and Eleazar, for their part, did not accept Hanan's claim to supreme authority. In the midst of this, the Festival of Unleavened Bread arrived. Hanan entered the Temple one day before the festival. His followers had hidden their weapons in their clothes. The other priests, delighted, entered the Temple, believing that Hanan and his followers had become peaceful. Since they saw no weapons in their hands, they had no suspicions. However, as the people entered for the festival, they massacred everyone who entered, without distinguishing anyone. When Simon and Eleazar realized what was happening, they began to massacre Hanan's followers whom

they found outside. Hanan came out of the Temple and engaged Eleazar and Simon in battle. A fierce battle erupted between the two sides.

When Simon heard of their internal conflict, he began to divert his army towards it. Some Jews went to Titus and said, "We will open the Temple gates for you. You, in turn, remove Eleazar, Simon, and Hanan, and let us live in peace." But Titus did not trust them. The Jews again divided into two, some saying Titus would enter and others saying he would not.

When some Roman soldiers realized the Jewish disunity, they approached the Temple wall without Titus's knowledge. For a moment, Hanan, Eleazar, and Simon formed a united front and drove these Roman soldiers away by stoning them. The Jews who had lined up to open the gate for the Romans were also beaten. Some of them even turned back and beat the Romans. The Roman soldiers fled. Because they fled, the Jews pursued them and hurled terrible insults at them.

Titus was greatly angered by his soldiers who had gone without his orders and returned disgraced and defeated. He said, "You are guilty for going without knowing the cunning of the Jews and without obeying my command. You know that there was a king who killed his son for disobeying his command. Therefore, you too deserve death for not obeying the command." They confessed their grave error and begged for forgiveness.

When Titus heard of the Jewish disunity, he ordered his soldiers to reach the first wall and demolish it. He also dug dangerous pits along the roads. To hide them, he covered the pits with light material. The Jews, weakened by their internal strife, did not notice this cunning plan of Titus. On one side, Simon and Eleazar had formed a front only to fight Hanan. Hanan had sixty thousand

soldiers and four hundred military commanders and had begun to rule the Holy Land.

Simon, for his part, had one hundred thousand Jews and five thousand Romans and was acting alone. Most of the priests sided with Eleazar. The remaining, whose role was unknown, acted as mediators among the three. Simon, Eleazar, and Hanan, however, lined up to fight the Romans as before. The Romans, as usual, said to each other, "Let us clarify our roles." Titus sent his messenger, named Bibaber, to tell the Jews that he wanted peace. When Bibaber reached the Jews, one Jew stabbed and killed him with a spear. Titus was greatly angered by this. He prepared large iron ladders and brought them to the first wall. The Jews saw this and formed an alliance. Hanan, Simon, and Eleazar were forced to unite. They killed everyone who had built the iron image for Titus. They engaged the Romans in battle and drove them away from the Temple wall. After doing this, Eleazar, Simon, and Hanan immediately began to fight each other, forgetting their hatred for the Romans.

Titus became aware of their situation. He brought the iron image back to the first Temple wall. He demolished the first wall and entered. He widened the demolished wall to make it easy to enter as desired. When Simon, Eleazar, and Hanan saw this, they allied again. They deployed their soldiers for defense. War broke out. Titus fought fiercely. He gave his soldiers much money to fight bravely. The three Jewish leaders (Simon, Hanan, and Eleazar) led their soldiers bravely and fought. Simon warned, "If any soldier is found to have fled out of fear, his property will be plundered."

Hearing Simon's warning, Titus went to the place where Hanan was fortified and fighting. He tried to launch a special attack in

that direction but failed. The Jews united and repelled him with stones. The Romans guarded the demolished wall fiercely, which they had breached to enter. The war continued for four days. On the fourth day, other Gentiles joined Titus and intensified the war.

The Jews were defeated and forced to flee.

Titus sent a message to the Jews telling them that they should not leave their country and that they could live in peace. He told them,

"Just affirm your obedience to the Roman government, and you can live in peace. Your country will not be plundered, and the Temple will not be destroyed." But they did not accept his words.

Titus waited for five days to receive their resolute message. On the fifth day, however, he prepared for war and approached their country. As he approached, he found Hanan and Simon preparing to remove the iron ladder that the Romans had prepared earlier to facilitate their entry into the country.

When Titus saw Hanan and Simon, he spoke to them peacefully.

He told them, "Destroying the country's wall and causing other destruction is not beneficial. No one is incapable of destruction. It is not my goal to destroy the Temple and devastate the country. If you obey us peacefully, a covenant of peace will be established between us. All that you hate will be removed from you." He then ordered Joseph, son of Coryon, to go to the Temple and convince

them to accept the proposal in a language they understood, realizing the harm and damage. Joseph, son of Coryon, moved to accomplish his mission according to the order given by Titus. "My

fellow Jews, the actions you have taken to defend yourselves, believing they would be beneficial, have led your country to a worse downfall. Your army has perished. The country's wall has been demolished. These Roman Gentiles have subjugated all the kings of other countries. They have also brought you to

destruction. From now on, there is no one who will stand by your side or shelter you.

"Do not say that God will give us another refuge or another helper. It has become God's will for you to be subjugated to these Gentile kings because of your evil deeds. You have done everything that God has not permitted. You have shed innocent blood. You have wronged people. You have defiled the Temple. You have forgotten that the Temple is the house of God. You have killed His priests. You have killed the people whom God has chosen. After doing all this, how can you expect help from God? It is impossible to expect help from God while clinging to defiled practices. God does not accept your plea. Instead, He hands you over to your enemy."

"If you now say that you will fight and defend yourselves, and then win, your country's wall has been demolished in two places. Your army is very small. Most of your weapons have been captured and are in the hands of the enemy. It will take no time for your enemies to destroy the remaining wall. You are always humiliated by error. Your enemies, however, are growing stronger day by day. If you persist in your current state, you will perish. Not a single person will remain.

"Our fathers—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—were peaceful and were guided by God and conquered all. They were our foundations, and we should have been guided by their example. They themselves lived in harmony with the Gentiles around them. There was a time when they obeyed the Egyptians. They endured until God delivered them from their hands. There was also a time when they obeyed the Roman kings. And God did not blame them for this.

"If you obey the Romans now to escape destruction and annihilation, God will not count it as a sin against you. But you cannot live by rebelling against the Romans. You will only bring greater sorrow and suffering upon yourselves. The Romans are better for you than anyone else, for it was through them that you were saved from the Canaanites. It was the Romans who delivered you from many Gentiles. You cannot live by betraying the Romans. It is better to accept what God has brought with thanksgiving and live. God has permitted the Romans to rule all.

"In this world, one part of the world will rule for a certain period, and then when it declines (falls), another will take its place. There was a time when you were destined to rule over many kingdoms.

But after a while, God took the power from you and gave it to another. Now, if you step out of God's command and say, 'We will not obey the Romans,' only destruction and annihilation await you. God has permitted the Romans to hold the world in our time.

It is not shameful to live under the power of those who are stronger than you. Any human being lives by submitting to the powerful. Even an animal seeks a way to save its life.

"This is not the first time you have fallen into the hands of the Romans. Now, they do not want you to suffer as in the past. They are prepared to receive you well. They are prepared to do good for your country, your Temple, and your people. Fear God. Do not destroy this land further than the destruction that has already befallen you."

Simon and Hanan, who lacked the opportunity for understanding, received Joseph, son of Coryon's explanation with insults and contempt. They wanted to beat him. Indeed, they showered him with stones and tried to kill him. But he moved away from their grip and said, "You are the ones who have shed the blood of

many innocents. But I and those like me will not allow the people to be destroyed and annihilated. You have armed yourselves to destroy this country. Your ancestors, by fearing God, conquered all. They did nothing without God's help. But you are far from God's faith. God has handed you over."

"Abraham fell into the hands of Pharaoh, and his wife was taken captive. And God punished Pharaoh and struck him. Abimelech also tried to take Isaac's wife. Abimelech was the king of the Philistines. The ancient Israelites, when Pharaoh ruled them harshly, sought God's help rather than trying to confront Pharaoh. But by God's power, they were delivered from him. They also defeated the Amalekites in the time of Moses, with God ordering them to raise Moses's hand. And Joshua did not demolish the walls of Jericho by military force but by God's power.

"In the time of Joshua, when Achan took what was forbidden, God was angered at Israel and allowed Israel to be defeated by a few enemies. Many defeats have occurred to the people of Israel from time to time. However, through the kindness of Gideon and Hosea, and others, many victories have been recorded. Gideon, led by God, defeated many of the Midianite army.

"Samson was powerful without sin and was a victor. But when he sinned, he fell into the hands of the enemy and lived grinding grain like a female slave. Saul, with God's help, defeated the enemy. But after he angered God, he fell into the hands of the enemy. David, by angering God, clashed with his son Absalom. Asa and Jehoshaphat defeated the enemy through prayer. Through the prayer and kindness of the prophet Elisha, the armies of Armenia and Sebaste fled. God punished the Armenians with hunger and thirst, so they were forced to flee in panic.

"Amaziah defeated the Edomites by God's power. But when he began to worship their idols, God humiliated him. Hezekiah's prayer drove away King Sennacherib's army. They fled without war. Zedekiah exposed himself to downfall because he did not accept the advice of the prophets. Take all this and similar things to heart and ask for God's help. You are not in a state where you can obtain God's help now. Has there ever been a time among you when an Israelite won without God's help? When God punished and handed your fathers over to the enemy, was there a time when they were saved from falling into the hands of the enemy by walls, fences, a large army, and abundant weapons? "To prevent Him from helping you, behold, you have defiled God's holy ways. If God had not handed you over, you would not have been defeated by the enemy. Since you have abandoned faith and rejected the law, what kind of victory do you expect? With such a downfall, it would have been better if we had been scattered and empty than gathered. The scattering that has befallen us from time to time has led us to corruption. If God's glory had been among us, strife would not have arisen among us, and we would not have fought each other.

"But if we are saved, it is by error, and we do not give thanks. We are consumed by quarrel. Our internal conflict has brought calamity upon us. While suffering this tribulation, nothing prevents us from seeking God. No one among our ancestors who angered God achieved victory. We ourselves have come to this downfall and destruction. Our disunity, our love for money, and our other lawlessness have brought tribulation upon us from the Romans.

"The disunity of Hyrkanos and Aristobulus first caused us to fall into the hands of the Romans. Was it not Herod, our own kin, who caused this country to be defiled by Vespasian and Antiochus?

Was it not Herod who sold the country of the Hasmonean children to win by approaching the Romans? And were you not subjugated to the Romans through Herod? Why do you hate the Romans today, whom you have been serving as Herod's mouthpiece for so long? If you say that an official appointed by Rome has wronged us, you can accuse him before the Emperor. You were obeying Emperor Nero without reason. Why do you say, 'We will not obey Vespasian now'? Vespasian has not committed any specific atrocity against you that you can point to. I, Vespasian, fought him a lot under the responsibility of being chosen by you. My brave soldiers perished, and I fled with forty men and went to a cave. But first, in the war fought under my leadership, we killed many of his soldiers. You are the ones who forced me to lead a war beyond my capacity.

"After many of my followers perished, it became difficult for me to approach the Romans. But the Romans received me peacefully and treated me well. They did not punish me for the wrong I committed, but they forgave me and gave me the honor I deserved. Until now, I have lived peacefully with them. During the war, I intended to flee and come to you, but I could not. Today, I thank God, for He has saved me from coming to you. If I had fled and come to you during the war, I would have betrayed the Romans for something that would not have benefited me. I would have been like you. I would have cooperated in your corrupt actions. Why did you try to kill me for advising you? God separated from you long ago. Do not think that you can fight and defeat the Romans in your current state. For without God's help, you can do nothing.

"God has handed you over to humiliation and has exposed you to slavery. Accept my words as a great counsel, and do not mislead

me. Why should people lose peace because of you, and why should one Jewish resident hate you so much if he loses peace due to the war you instigate? Pay attention to what I am telling you. Pray to God from where you are that He may give you the opportunity to triumph over your enemies. But you are not ready for this. Only your ancestors benefited from this.

"Do not say, 'We will win in the future!' Your steadfastness and power will not defeat the enemy. If God is not with you, you have no benefit. Before you, there were those who said, 'We have steadfastness,' but they perished in war, unaware that God had abandoned them. Their actions angered God. The Siloam pool was not usually full. Your enemies were using it, but because God allowed it, the water became full. Consider everything I say as true. God has left you and has allowed you to be humiliated. Even if a person enters to live with a family and the family's wickedness and cunning increase, he will leave the house. Similarly, when God sees His chosen people cooperating with rebels, He will not allow His radiant light to remain on the wicked men."

The light of God's presence has departed from your Temple, for you have defiled it and multiplied sin within its walls. God's light dwells only in holiness. It does not reside in defiled places. If God's light has been removed from your midst, who do you trust?

I know you won't budge from your old ways. I understand that God has allowed you to perish and destroy, so this country will be destroyed, and the revered Temple will fall.

Your hearts have hardened like stone; advice will not soften your hearts. Just as water dripping on a stone for a long time does not pierce or soften it, neither will counsel turn your hearts. I have offered all the advice and admonition I can and should, revealing everything that I believe will help and benefit you. I have held

nothing back. Now, save this temple that the prophets built from destruction. For if you destroy it, it will be counted against you. If

the temple is destroyed, your very existence will also be destroyed. If you don't rescue the pure Temple and show no pity for this country, then at least pity your own lives, your children, and your wives. Observe the compassionate approach King Vespasian's son, Titus, is taking towards you. He undoubtedly cares for your well-being. He will not break the covenant he has made with you. I fully understand his support for you; he does not wish to see your suffering. However, he desires your obedience, for you have been obeying the Roman officials before him. From today onwards, I will separate myself from you. My father, my steadfastness, my wife, and my children are among you. If Titus breaks the covenant he made with you, kill my family and me. Let this be your guarantee.

After explaining all this in detail, Joseph, son of Coryon, wept. He saw the bitter suffering inflicted upon the Jews. He ordered the Roman captives held by the Jews to be released and allowed them to go wherever they wished. Through Joseph, son of Coryon's advice, most of the Jews prepared to obey Titus. They removed the rebellious leaders, Eleazar, Simon, and Hanan, and replaced them with others.

However, these newly elected leaders immediately abandoned their given responsibility and began to kill any Jew who wanted to join the Romans, ambushing them at every gate. The people were trapped and suffered from famine. Simon, Hanan, and Eleazar, on the other hand, continued their plunder, asserting, "Who will remove us from power?" They chose to kill anyone who refused to surrender their property on the spot.

Due to the severe famine, if anyone tried to leave the country to search for even herbs, the Romans would kill them. In this manner, the Romans killed many Jews and hung their bodies. Eleazar, Hanan, and Simon, for their part, made it their work to kill any Jew they had defeated. Especially any Jew they heard saying, "It's better to obey the Romans," they would kill and hang their bodies on the walls. Observing their actions, Titus ordered his soldiers not to kill any Jew. Until this time, Titus had not ceased to wish good things for the Jews.

Eleazar, Simon, and Hanan, however, did everything they could to provoke Titus and to make him change his mind, to hate and massacre the Jews until the end. When Titus heard of their actions, he ordered his soldiers to breach the wall. He did this to save the people from the cruelty of those Jewish rebels. He divided his soldiers into four groups and lined them up at the four corners of the wall. He prepared heavy iron tools to demolish the first wall. Hanan and his followers went to fight the Roman soldiers. They suddenly arrived and killed many Roman soldiers.

They also burned the tools prepared to demolish the wall. The Romans, seeing the temporary strength of the Jews, retreated to their camp. At this time, Titus questioned, "How can you retreat defeated by the Jews when you were supposed to break through the wall on two sides and control them? They have been dwindling and perishing in all the wars fought so far. Only a very few remain. No one else has sent them aid. But we have a large army."

The Jews, by persisting in their stance, were determined to suffer severe annihilation. "They will perish, and their Temple will be destroyed. Rise up and fight them with force!" he encouraged them. He ordered them not to fight directly but to besiege them

and starve them to death. The Roman soldiers then completely encircled the Jewish country, cutting off all entry and exit, preventing the Jews from moving. The Jews suffered greatly from famine. This also meant the country became open for anyone to enter.

Some wicked individuals, poisoned by intrigue, falsely accused Annas the High Priest to the tyrant Simon, claiming he supported the Romans. Annas the High Priest, however, had gone out to save others from the oppression inflicted by the other tyrant, Hanan. Simon ordered his followers to seize Annas the High Priest. He also seized his three sons with their father and ordered them to be killed. Annas the High Priest begged Simon to kill him before killing his sons. But Simon refused. He then begged Simon to allow him to embrace and kiss his sons goodbye. Simon again refused. Instead, he brought them out to the wall where the Romans could see them and had them executed.

Before their execution, Annas the High Priest said to Simon, "Simon, if I wanted to go to the Romans, no one would have stopped me. But you are going to unjustly kill me with my beloved children. I have accepted death at your hands because I know you were sent by God to bring suffering. You attained your current power with my support, and you have caused much evil to God's people. Our wish was that you would save us from the tyrant Hanan. But you unjustly killed the people of the Temple. By approaching us as a friend, you became our absolute enemy. When we said we would defeat the enemy under your leadership, your enmity became our destruction.

"You became the quintessential leader of evil and killed many in a brutal manner. You shed the blood of many innocents in vain. Because you massacred our people, we, too, have suffered

massacres. Since our people have perished, behold, we are about to fall into the hands of the Romans. Titus is better than you for us. And God knows this. If it weren't for your wickedness and that of your ilk, Titus would have wished to give us peace and let us live in peace. But we could not attain this opportunity due to your rebellion.

"Titus fears God, so he prevented his soldiers from burning the Temple. During the Passover festival, he allowed us to spend it in peace. But you, during the festival of apostasy, killed priests and others gathered for the festival inside the Temple. You killed priests on the altar and defiled the Temple. The house of God was defiled by you.

"Ah! In all your transgressions, I consider myself a partner because I did not oppose you, and by supporting you and enabling you to gain power, God will judge me for the blood of all those killed by you. What reason do I have to be saved from facing God's judgment for supporting you? That is why God has brought calamity upon me through you. God's judgment is not distorted; it is eternally just. If I die without seeing the destruction of the Temple, it will be life for me. But the killing of my children grieves me greatly. Therefore, if that is the case, do not kill my children. If not, kill me first. Why did you prevent me from embracing and kissing them goodbye?" Then Annas the priest said, "My children, this is the man whom I enabled to gain power, who is now prepared to kill us. I enabled him to gain power by the command of the priests and the elders.

"I called him from where he was and brought him, and the priests sent me to anoint him as the supreme authority. But he came and became an enemy to me and to you. Hanan's cruelty also did not benefit him. My children, weeping and fear will not help us. Only

patience and obedience to God will benefit us. It is better to be killed than to live with wicked and pagan people. It is better not to see the destruction of the Temple. Rejoice in your death by God's command. I am at an old age and am about to endure death. You, too, are young; endure with patience."

"Remember that there was a woman in the Jewish nation who endured with God's grace when her seven children were killed. Others, too, were unjustly killed by people and accepted death with thanksgiving to God. Seven children were killed by Antiochus, and they accepted their death with thanksgiving. If I am killed before you, my sorrow will be less. But if you precede me, my sorrow will increase. Especially if you are killed and I remain alive afterwards, what a terrible life I would have seen! If I had seen the killing of my children, I would have been like Zedekiah. It would have been better if Zedekiah had died with his children. But because he lived after the killing of his children, his sorrow became profound.

"My children, Simon may kill our bodies, but he cannot separate our souls. You will reach eternal rest in a short time. If your death grieves me, I will intercede for you to God, and you will receive forgiveness for your sins. My children, separate yourselves from the world, and accept the act of killing with patience. I will guide you, and I will be enriched by you. When you meet righteous people, tell them, 'Those whose sea was parted, whose water dried up, for whom the sun stood still, for whom manna rained down, whom prophets guided, and whom the righteous loved, your brethren have been humiliated. The wicked ruled and killed them.'" After this, the elderly priest Annas said to the man prepared to kill him, "Do what you are commanded; kill me with a sword. You must kill my children in the same way, and my blood

must mix with the blood of my children. And place my body with the bodies of my children, and connect my mouth to their severed necks. I wanted to embrace and kiss my children while alive, but it was not granted to me. So, let me meet them after death."

"Oh Lord God, it was not my desire for humankind to be so corrupted. My wish was for them to establish peace and live in peace. But their leaders did not stand for peace, and that led them to this terrible death. Oh God, do not let what they have done befall me, and do not hold me responsible for the suffering they have endured," he said.

The tyrannical rebels, Simon and Hanan, who exposed the people to all this suffering, had not been touched by the famine for a while. But eventually, it reached them. They resorted to eating animal waste. They consumed all the leather of their chariots and even the handles of their swords. No wheat or grass could be found; it had all been consumed. The Roman soldiers had cut down all the trees, turning the land into a desert.

The area around the Temple was adorned with beautiful and fragrant plants. The Romans had already ravaged all of this.

There was a woman from the Jordan River who had sought refuge in the Temple. She had come to this Temple to save her life when Vespasian waged war in the area. She came to the Temple with her wealth, female, and male slaves. She also had a child, still an infant, whom she never tired of looking at. As the famine began, everyone with strength plundered all her property, leaving nothing. The woman and her child suffered greatly from hunger. She could not soothe her child's crying, so she decided to kill her child. Her patience ran out. At this time, she said to her child, "I love you as much as you love me, mother. You thought you would feed your mother and see her live. You endured so

much. You are the one who will bury me. I fear you will die before me. My exposure to hardship worries me. If you had died for another reason, how good that would have been! I would have buried you honorably and committed you to God's mercy. Now, the time has come for you and me to fight. You and I will die in this famine. If you die, there is no one to bury you. Your body will fall anywhere, and even dogs are full and won't eat you. So, I have decided to kill you and relieve you from hunger. Then I will eat you. Let the stomach that carried you be your grave. I will satisfy my hunger by eating you. This is how you will repay me for carrying you in my womb, nursing you, and raising you with care."

"Eleazar, Simon, and Hanan have caused all this suffering. Anyone who remembers my actions will forever curse these savage creatures, for God's severe wrath has come upon us through them. And this will be recounted from generation to generation."

When she finished speaking, she took a sword in one hand, turned her face away so as not to see, and struck and killed him with the sword. She cut off a piece of his flesh, roasted it over a fire, and ate it. She kept the remaining flesh. Everyone who saw the smoke from the fire rushed to her to snatch what she was eating. They asked her, "You found fresh meat, why are you eating it alone? Where did you get it?" She replied, "I haven't finished eating the meat I found alone. More is left. Sit down, and I will serve it to you, and you can eat it." They sat down to eat what would be served to them. She brought the child's flesh in a serving dish and presented it to them, saying, "This is the flesh of my beloved child, whom I killed with my own hands. I roasted and ate some of his flesh. I have kept the remaining parts."

"Here it is," she said. Simon and Hanan were among those who rushed in, seeing the smoke and eager to snatch something to eat. This woman then said to Simon and his ilk, "You are merciless and cruel. If I butchered and ate my child, it is you whom generations will curse more than me. You have less pity for children than I do. So don't be surprised that I ate him. You ate all the people, but I only ate my child. Just as you were cruel to all the people, I was cruel to my only child. You must accept this error of yours."

Everyone who came, seeing the smoke and eager to snatch something to eat, was greatly terrified. They left, trembling. The actions of this woman were heard throughout the land, and everyone was greatly shocked. They remembered that this had been prophesied by God. When the unclean, rebellious, and power-hungry Jewish rogues like Simon saw this woman's ultimate suffering, they allowed the people to move out of the city.

The people then left the city and went to the Romans.

When Titus saw this, he said, "You know what is hidden in the heart of man. I did not come to this country to torment people. I invited them to establish peace. I made much effort to prevent them from dying, but they came to this destruction. The woman who ate her child caused me even greater illness and shock. It made me tremble and unable to stand. I am clean from this.

Creator, do not hold me accountable for this great human downfall. The perpetrators of this destruction are the helpless tyrants like Simon. Give me power over them so I can avenge the annihilation of the people."

Titus ordered that anyone approaching him should be received well. Many people then came out and surrendered to the Romans. Titus's followers, the Roman soldiers, gave food to

everyone who came and fed them. However, most had been deprived of food for a long time, so their throats were closed, and they could not eat. Therefore, many people died when they tasted food. Some who were not severely affected, upon seeing food, could not control themselves and swallowed large amounts, choking and perishing.

Titus, seeing the situation, ordered Joseph, son of Coryon, the Jew who had been with him before, to line them up systematically and feed them with milk and honey to soften their throats and intestines, so they might save their lives. He fed them by giving them milk and honey to soften their throats and intestines. In this way, many were saved from death.

When the gates that had been closed to the Jews were opened for them, they came out with their gold and silver. Some swallowed gold and pearls so that the Romans would not seize them. If the Romans entered the city, they would plunder it. One Roman soldier, an Armenian by birth, saw a Jew swallowing gold and told his companion. The two of them killed the Jew, cut open his stomach, and took out the swallowed pearls and gold.

When this news reached the Armenian and Arab soldiers who were Roman soldiers, they began to kill Jews and cut open their stomachs to extract the pearls and gold. "Remove the pearls, silver, and gold from your chariots again! This is what has brought suffering upon the Jews everywhere. Your own soldiers might kill you for the pearls and gold, especially the Armenian and Arab soldiers, they might," they said. So, they removed their pearls, gold, and other valuable clothes from wherever they were. These Armenian and Arab soldiers, and those from the West who followed their example, were separated from the army and sent away. They stopped killing Jews in search of pearls and gold, as

they had intended. However, these Armenian and Arab soldiers did not stop secretly killing any Jew they found alone and cutting open their stomachs.

When the Jewish people realized that the Romans were perishing from famine due to Simon's rebellion and wickedness, they desired to destroy this Jewish country themselves. They approached the third wall and began to demolish it using various tools. The rebels, Simon and his followers, did not rest even at this time. They fought the Armenian soldiers who approached the wall. The Armenians said to each other, "The Jews do not have the same power as before, so they cannot lighten the burden of the tools we have prepared to demolish the Temple wall. We will stay away from the wall and observe their situation."

One of the Jewish leaders, Hanan, retreated and went out of the Temple to the city to find food. When the Roman soldiers learned this, they demolished the wall. At this time, the Roman soldiers shouted, and the Jews hidden in the Temple also shouted from where they were. The Roman soldiers, realizing that the Jews who had entered the Temple were rising to fight them without any fear or hesitation, engaged them in battle.

The Jews spent the next night rebuilding the demolished wall. The next morning, the Romans were greatly astonished by the Jewish ingenuity, seeing the new wall they had built overnight. They told Titus about the Jewish diligence. Titus, however, said that the new wall had no strength and could be easily demolished. Following his advice, the Romans engaged the Jews in battle, and the Jews, using the wall as a fortification, struck the Romans. The Romans even reached the point of saying, "We must return to our country for now."

Titus observed the weariness of his soldiers and gathered them. After explaining that they would become a laughingstock if they returned without subjugating the Jews, he encouraged them to complete what they had started for a short time. He used the lives of sailors as an example, explaining that sailors endure waves and much hardship to reach the port. He also used the example of a house builder, explaining that the process from laying the foundation to completing the roof and walls is very exhausting, but the owner rejoices when it is finished.

Furthermore, he greatly encouraged them by detailing the farmer's toil, explaining that if they returned without accomplishing their mission of coming from Rome to the land of the Jews, all their toil would be in vain. Regarding the weakening of the Jewish people, he said, "Because we have besieged their city, only a few remain, having perished from swords, famine, malaria, and other plagues and diseases. Now, if you return without subjugating the Jews, all the countries under Roman rule through your power will rebel, and in the end, everyone who sees you will look at you like animals. You are eating and drinking. But the Jews are under severe famine, and most of them have perished. Despite all this suffering, they fight for their cause. The goal they have set, if possible, is to win, or if not, to perish and gain eternal fame. You, too, must win and gain the fame of victory.

"In the time of Emperor Nero, you defeated these Jews. In that era, you said, 'We will not retreat until we defeat the Jews and bring them under our control.' Vespasian is better than Nero. He also wants you to defeat the Jews," he said, making them change their minds.

The Roman soldiers heard Titus's advice and prepared for a new war. On the night Titus made his announcement, about seven of

the military commanders led their army to the demolished wall of the Temple. They then leaped and entered the city. The Jews were exhausted and asleep due to the severe famine, disease, and thirst.

The Jews awoke in shock from their sleep and cried out. They did not move from where they were. When Titus heard the Jewish wailing, he realized that his soldiers had breached the wall and entered the Jewish camp. At dawn, the Jews fled to the Temple. The Romans pursued them relentlessly and slaughtered them with swords at the edge of the Temple. An unprecedented massacre occurred on that day. The Jews perished in every ravine, and their wailing was heard far away. Many people from both the Romans and the Jews perished, and the Temple was filled with human corpses.

The Jews fought from night until seven in the morning, their hope of survival completely exhausted. The Romans were defeated and retreated. Titus then demolished the last wall of the Temple. There was no longer any final stronghold that could serve the Jews. When this wall was demolished, the entire area became open.

When the Jews gathered in the Temple to celebrate their festival, Titus came to them with Joseph, son of Coryon. Joseph, son of Coryon, was a priest. Titus called Hanan and, raising his voice where his followers were, said, "You Jews, who advised you to be so cruel as to destroy your people until this Temple is destroyed?

If you had simply obeyed us, the Romans, all this destruction would not have occurred. If you had not allowed this house to be destroyed, you would not have been so cruel. But I do not want the Temple to be destroyed, and I did not come to destroy it. You are the ones who defiled it and caused human blood to flow within

it. When it is a festival, you gather to celebrate it. You have abandoned the expected religious order. Come out to the field instead of fortifying yourselves in the Temple for war. Let whoever wins, win. But respect the Temple of God. Do not make it a battlefield by shedding blood. Let your desire to do so cease. Do not remove the offerings of worship from it."

We didn't come to wage war against you; we are fighting you only because you have ceased the obedience that was customary to us. If you are tired, surrender to us and live in peace, and respect our commands.

Hanan then responded to Titus, saying, "For this, we are prepared to offer a great sacrifice. Our blood is for the Temple." Titus then gave Hanan the following answer: "You, full of rebellion and deceit, have unjustly shed the blood of your own Jewish brethren. Do you say God accepts your blood as a sacrifice? How can that be? It is written that God accepts a pure sacrifice, a blameless offering. All the disgrace that exists in the world has accumulated in your lives. You are rebels and defilers. There is no disgrace you have not committed. The supremacy of the Temple does not deserve disgrace. You are the ones who defiled the Temple. Your war should not be for the Temple. You are prepared to destroy the Temple. You should not fight for the Temple; you should fight for your country. If this is the case, leave the Temple and let us fight elsewhere.

A strong person supports the weak and removes trouble from them. But you, through your actions, made the Temple a place for its destruction. Is there anyone among you who would like to take away a meal offered to another without permission? How can you be prepared to destroy God's offering? To make God's house a battlefield? Now, I have not come to destroy the Temple. My

coming is not to wage war. My coming is to establish peace with you. You said, 'I have eaten.' We have shown you humility that no people have ever seen. But you responded to this unexpected gesture with war. Our custom in war is to treat everyone with mercy and care. When King Nebuchadnezzar besieged your king, he spared the Temple and surrendered, showing his merciful nature. In this way, Zedekiah saved his people from massacre by surrendering. You should follow the path of these two kings. Have pity on yourselves and your people.

If you express your submission, there will be peace. I plead with you before God with a covenant. I beg you. We are prepared to bring peace upon you, without counting the betrayals you have committed against us. To confirm that I seek peace, Joseph is with me. I will give all this to you and other members of your people. Save your Temple from destruction. Now is the time. With the advice I give you, you will live in peace, performing your worship in an orderly manner. You will live by this advice, bearing witness before God." Titus pleaded with them extensively.

Joseph, son of Coryon, the priest, was translating and explaining Titus's entire persuasive speech in Hebrew. Joseph, son of Coryon, wept as he translated Titus's speech, anticipating that they would not accept his words or his own reproach. He added, "You are destined to fulfill the prophecy spoken by Daniel; you are to be utterly destroyed for the last time. If this were not the case, through your actions, the Temple would have been destroyed. You would have confirmed your submission to those to whom God has given earthly authority and power."

These rebellious and cruel Jewish factions, Simon and Hanan, were unwilling to accept the explanation and plea made by Titus and Joseph, son of Coryon, the priest. Many priests and Jews,

however, seized the opportunity and surrendered to Titus. Titus warned his Roman soldiers not to retaliate against those who had voluntarily surrendered and ensured they were treated well. These rebels, Simon and his followers, seeing that everyone was free to leave, closed the gates of the Temple, preventing anyone from leaving.

Titus, seeing the rush of many people trying to escape the horrible war and massacre, and seeing the rebellious Jewish leaders preventing them from leaving, approached the demolished Temple wall with Joseph, son of Coryon, and again pleaded with the rebellious leaders, "Please, do not seek destruction! Do not prevent those who wish to leave!" The Jews, whose exit was blocked and who wanted to leave, looked across at Joseph, son of Coryon, and wept, saying, "We know that God has brought this suffering upon us because of our sins. We have wronged by betraying the Romans even though we had no power. Now, tell Titus and find a way for us to escape death. We want to surrender to him, but our leaders have closed the gates on us." When the rebellious Jewish leaders heard their cries of distress, they rushed to kill them. The Romans, to save the Jews from being slaughtered by their own people, leaped in and fought the rebels. However, the rebellious Jewish leaders defeated the Romans. The Romans then retreated and entered the Holy of Holies. The Holy of Holies had never been violated before that day. The Jews also followed and fought them inside the Holy of Holies.

At this time, Titus pleaded with Hanan, one of the tyrants, saying, "You have defiled a place that is forbidden to anyone except the chief priests. Now, do not kill the people who have entered here." But Hanan did not accept Titus's plea. At this time, Titus ordered

forty thousand soldiers to enter the Temple and destroy everyone. Titus also wished to observe the battle from a high vantage point.

The Romans again surrounded the area, subjecting them to another famine. The Jews suffered from hunger. When the famine intensified, the Jews began to steal and eat any Roman war animals they could find. When the Romans realized this, they stayed awake at night, guarding their animals. A Jew named Jonathan, from a fortification, threatened them, saying, "You Romans are about to be defeated by us! I am one of the Jews punished by famine. God punished us through you. So, if there is anyone strong, let him come and fight me!" One of the Romans went and fought him, and Jonathan killed him.

Next to the Temple, there was a hall built by Solomon. Solomon had built this hall as a resting place for kings. The Jews had repeatedly added a strong poison to this hall. When the Romans came, they planned to burn them with the poison. This hall had a secret exit and entrance. The Jews, using this secret passage, attacked the Roman soldiers who had entered. At this time, however, the Jews were defeated and fled to Solomon's Hall. The Romans followed them. However, the Jews, realizing that the entrance to this hall would be suffocated by poisonous smoke, no Jew was found in the hall. The Romans, admiring the hall's construction, sent one man through the secret passage to ignite it with poison and fire.

When the fire was ignited there, many Romans perished. Those who remained struggled to escape, and the Jews waited and massacred them. All the Roman soldiers who had entered the Temple compound perished. The hall burned, and the soldiers also burned. The Romans left the area around the Temple and

gathered in one place, losing hope. The Jews believed they would annihilate them through their cunning.

Titus gathered all the Gentiles who had come to assist the Roman soldiers and ordered them to surround the Jewish country with all their might and destroy every Jew they found. They encircled the country, giving the Jews no escape. They said, "They are determined to perish."

As the siege intensified, famine and death grew stronger among the Jews. Many Jews perished from the famine. Some of the rebellious Jewish leaders surrendered to Titus. He, in turn, received and killed them.

When the Romans realized that all the Jews were completely exhausted, they entered the country and set the House of God ablaze. After this time, there was no longer any place that posed a threat to the Romans. He ordered his soldiers not to burn the Temple. However, the military commanders said, "If you don't burn the Temple, you cannot rule the Jews. You cannot completely control the Jews. As long as the Temple stands, the Jews will not stop fighting. They will not hesitate to sacrifice their lives for the Temple. But if the Temple is destroyed, they will have nothing to fight for. We can scatter them everywhere and rule them separately."

At this time, Titus said, "How can you burn the Temple until I tell you to?"

At the entrance of the Temple, there was a silver plate on the east side. Titus had kept this plate in place. Suddenly, the Jews came and piled on top of it. When the Romans came to take the silver plate, they burned the door. The door became open for them to enter the main sanctuary. They entered the Temple and brought in their idols. They also brought offerings to their lord, Titus. They

cursed the Temple and praised Titus. The few Jews who were there fought the Romans because they were greatly provoked. Titus heard of this act. He came to the Temple with his army and killed most of the Jews he found there. Those who fled went to Mount Zion. The next day, they burned the Holy of Holies, which was adorned with gold and decorated. As the door handles fell, the Romans let out a loud cry. Titus heard their cries and came and prevented them from burning the Temple. The Romans and Gentiles had gathered in great numbers and hated the Jews so much that they refused to obey Titus's command and burned the Temple. Titus tried to shout to them from various directions, but they refused to listen, and some of his own people were killed by his hand because they refused to leave the Temple when he ordered them to.

Titus cried out desperately to save the Temple from burning, to the point where his throat closed, and he could not speak. He was greatly astonished by the structure and beauty of the inner parts of the Temple, and he said, "This glory belongs to the house of God. This house alone is the dwelling place of the God of heaven and earth. This house is the dwelling place of the Most High. Therefore, it is right for the Jews to fight and contend. I have told the Jews to make peace with us and to stop fighting, for I love this house, and I will bring offerings and gifts into this house. It is superior to all the beautiful halls in Rome. I did not allow it to be burned; the rebellious Romans burned it without my permission." The entire Temple burned. The priests, seeing the burning, fought the Romans. They were very angry, so they fought them fiercely. After the Temple burned, they asked, "What life do we have?" and threw themselves into the burning fire and burned. The Jews who heard of the Temple's burning also heard that ancient archives

and arsenals were burning. At this time, one Jew prophesied, saying, "From now on, this house will be built not by human hands but by God's." He then said to the Jews, "You, without submitting to the Romans, remain steadfast in your refusal." The Jews who survived heard this man's words, gathered where they were, and deprived the Romans of sleep. They harassed them with ambush attacks wherever they were. Then they engaged them in open warfare. At this time, the Romans killed every Jew they had in their possession, without leaving a single one alive, treating them with kindness.

Before Vespasian came from Rome to the Middle East, a very bright star was seen. When the light of this star shone on the gold and diamond ornaments on the walls and in every battle, it looked like daylight. This bright star remained for seven days and seven nights. During the Passover festival, when this star appeared and disappeared, foolish people offered female sheep as sacrifices and rejoiced. The wise, however, grieved. When they tried to slaughter a ewe, it gave birth, and people were disgusted by it. At the eastern exit of the Temple, there was a unique gate. This gate was neither opened nor closed. It required the strength of many people to open and close it. At this time, however, they found it open. When it closed, people would gather and close it. But when they returned, they would find it open. While the foolish rejoiced at this, the wise grieved. Fiery horses were also seen circling the Temple. All these were seen in the land of Judah. Four years before the Temple was destroyed, a man who seemed to be insane, a foreigner, was heard shouting among the people, "A word from the east! A word from the west! A word on the Temple wall! A word from the four corners! A word on all who live

in Jerusalem!" The man's shouting did not stop until the enemy surrounded their country. Everyone hated him for his shouting. In that era, a stone was found with an inscription that read, "The Temple will be divided into four and destroyed." Near the Temple, in the Hebrew port of Antioch, there was a public square called Debbabay. Titus demolished this. As written in the Gospel, on this Debbabay, the Jews gathered and judged Christ. When the Jews saw the inscription on this stone, "Stone upon stone will not remain upon you," they noticed it. On the Holy of Holies wall, there was an inscription that read, "If the Temple is built, divided into four, a king will reign over Israel. He will reign to the ends of the earth. People will say, 'He is the king of Israel! He is the king of Rome!'" Priests and wise men would also say, "He is the king of Rome." But it was found with an inscription that read, "But he did not recognize that he is God, Christ."

The rebels, Hanan and Simon, sought peace and sent a message to Titus. Titus replied to them, "I wanted peace before the people perished because of you. But you persisted in your wickedness, destroyed the people, and destroyed the Temple. Now you are afraid for your lives. Whoever desires peace, let him throw down his weapons and come bound in chains." Many then came to Titus, binding themselves in chains, and saying, "Let us leave this country and go anywhere." Finally, these two burned the archive called Mahdere Zion. They did this so that the Romans would not find the secrets. They also took their followers and killed the great Roman officials who were guarding the Temple. These Romans were those whom Joseph, son of Coryon, had assigned to guard.

When the famine intensified, John and Simon surrendered to Titus. He then imprisoned them and paraded them through the city. At this time, after much reproach, Joseph, the priest, burned

the pure gold he had saved from the Temple and gave other Temple artifacts to Titus. After seeing this, Titus seized Phinehas, who was guarding the archives, and ordered him to bring the Temple archives. He gave him everything he had. He handed over money, archives, and all other items. In particular, priestly vestments and various perfumes were given to Titus by this man.

Titus took all this and returned to Rome. Before he left, he released Simon and John from prison and killed them.

The number of people buried, having drunk, as recounted by Manasseh, one of the city gate guards, was two hundred fifty thousand. Other leaders stated that one hundred thousand bodies were buried outside the city. These Jewish leaders were those who believed in and submitted to the Romans. Besides those whose bodies were carried out of the city and buried, countless others were thrown into ditches and ravines. Many more were devoured by vultures, hyenas, and dogs. Inside the Temple, those killed had no dirt covering their bodies, and their numbers exceeded. As Joseph, son of Coryon, recorded, while the Romans massacred as many Jews as they could, Eleazar, Simon, and Hanan would kill anyone rumored to support the Romans without any hesitation. In addition, the Jews were killing each other without any control. Each of the loyalists had one hundred loyalists. All those outside these groups killed each other. Hanan's loyalists would do as they pleased or be killed by the Romans.

There, the famine swept them away like leaves.

When the Jewish rebels died in battle, nine hundred thousand nine hundred Jews were taken captive alive by Titus and transported to Rome. All those who were taken captive to Rome died a worse death, being fed to lions.

We have already mentioned that Eleazar, the son of Annani the priest, did not support the unjust killing of the priest Annani and his children. We also stated that he left the country and moved to another place, understanding that the Temple was about to be destroyed. He remained hidden until Titus and his army returned to Rome.

When Titus left the land of Judea and continued his journey to Rome, after he had gone some distance, Eleazar came out of hiding. He built a fortification at a place called Mesio. The Jews who had somehow survived in the country gathered around him, and a new force appeared.

When Titus reached Antioch (while traveling to Rome), he heard of Eleazar's uprising. He sent a military commander named Silas with a large army to Eleazar. Silas drove him out of the fortified place where Eleazar had sought refuge. However, the Jews' morale was low, and they eagerly surrendered to the Romans.

At this time, Eleazar said to them, "Hear me, descendants of Abraham! Hear me, children of the prophets! Behold, our defeat is repeated. Our enemies, the Gentiles, have repeatedly defeated us. Our king has changed. Our enemies conquered us in battle.

God has turned His face from us, so we are disgraced. We are disgraced because we abandoned His commands and denied His law. In ancient times, we would win sometimes and lose other times. But now, a disgrace never before seen in the world has come upon us. Our enemies have burned and entered the revered Temple compound. They have conquered our country.

We have not been able to defeat them. You are between two thoughts. One is to hate death and remain alive, and you can achieve this by surrendering to the enemy. But the life you will live this way is a defiled life. You will live in absolute slavery. To live in

freedom, a worse death awaits you now. However, it is better to live in freedom, fighting for freedom, than to live in slavery and a defiled life. To fall on the battlefield for freedom is the better choice.

This slavery, which you embrace instead of freedom, is a curse that will be passed on to your children. A life lived in slavery is not life; it is a living death. Abraham's offering of his only son for sacrifice did not bring him death. He knew that if he killed his son according to God's will, he would gain a greater life. In his time, Josiah hated this world's life and chose to go to the light, giving his life to death, because his people were defiled by sin. He fought Pharaoh and fought valiantly on the battlefield. The good Josiah died fighting Pharaoh while he was still good, for he did not choose to live under Pharaoh's rule.

Righteous people like Josiah have faced the bitter war of this world without surrendering to slavery, becoming good examples and light for humanity. Moreover, people are receiving the reward for their goodness in this world. This world we live in is a world of work, and the second world is a world of joy. This world is a world of restlessness, toil, and suffering. To attain the good, one must engage in bitter struggle and sacrifice in this world. The joy of the hereafter is based on the bitter struggle carried out now.

Whoever understands the imperfection of this world desires the eternal world and joyfully accepts the hereafter. They can exchange the imperfect world for the perfect world. It is possible for man to exchange the transient world for the eternal world. The more years a person lives in this world, the only thing that awaits them is sorrow. Grief, sorrow, toil, and frustration will alternate for them. But if their life is shortened, they will escape toil and find rest.

Do not be eager to surrender yourselves and live in humiliation and shame.

When the Roman commander Silas learned of this, he went with a large army and fought them. The Jews killed many of the Roman soldiers. They also took many Roman prisoners and made them their slaves. Many of them were women, old men, and children. When Silas realized that he could not defeat them by fighting directly, he left a small number of soldiers to guard them and returned to Titus. When Titus heard this, he was enraged and ordered his soldiers to go to Mesada, where the Jews were, and destroy everyone.

When the Jews in Mesada heard of Titus's orders, they did not wait for the Roman soldiers to arrive. Instead, they took their weapons and courageously went out to meet them on the battlefield. When the Roman soldiers saw the Jews' courage and valor, they were astonished. At that moment, Eleazar ordered his soldiers to kill themselves and not to surrender to the Romans. He said, "Let not a single Roman soldier boast about killing us! Let not our enemies celebrate our death!" The Jews accepted his words with joy and stabbed themselves with their swords. When the Roman soldiers arrived, they found no one alive. They were greatly astonished and cried out loudly. They said, "They have chosen death over slavery!" The Roman soldiers, seeing this, returned to Titus and told him what had happened. Titus was greatly saddened by their words and cried out, "Oh, God, if these people had obeyed me, they would not have come to this horrible destruction!"

Titus then went to Rome with his Roman soldiers. He celebrated the war he fought in the land of Judea for one hundred twenty-three days. He brought the Jewish captives in chains and

paraded them through the streets of Rome. Many died on the way. When they arrived in Rome, he ordered his soldiers to gather those Jews who had fought in the Temple. Among them was the High Priest who had been captured. He tied them with chains to the triumphal arch where the captives were to be presented. He paraded them from the sea to the Colosseum.

Those Jews who were unable to endure the journey perished along the way. Those who arrived at the Colosseum were killed by lions. Titus then built a great monument in Rome with the gold and silver he had brought from Jerusalem.

He brought the Temple's golden menorah, the golden table, and the Ark of the Covenant, and he also made images of the sun and moon and set them up as signs. He also brought images of the Roman gods. When he set up these images, he was asked why he had done so, and he replied, "I set up these images to be worshipped by the nations." He also brought the sacred scroll of the law, the book of the Torah.

Vespasian's time was now ending. He called his son, Titus, and said to him, "My son, the Jews will rebel again. Do not leave the land of Judea, and do not make the Roman Empire their enemy. The Jews will not recognize the king whom God has appointed for them. My son, fight a war of peace with the Jews." Vespasian then died. After his death, his son, Titus, ruled.

They said, "We choose to die in honor!" After this, they spent the whole night mourning and weeping their last farewell. When morning came, the Jewish men killed their own children and wives and laid their bodies in deep pits, covering them with earth. They surrendered their souls to God rather than to the Gentiles. Finally, the men fought the Romans, and not a single one of them was captured; they all perished on the battlefield.

This is where the book written by **Joseph ben Gorion** about the history of the Jews, based on the **Second Temple**, concludes.

Joseph ben Gorion later also described the **lineage of the Jewish kings** after the Second Temple was built and the **events that took place during their return**. All glory and praise be to the Most High God. Amen.